

DECEMBER 2015

50MOVESMAGAZINE.COM

# 50 MOVES

## Rapid & Blitz

Carlsen and Grischuk  
take the titles

## Rishi Sardana

Interview after  
World Youth success

## 15 in 15

Moments which  
defined 2015

**Grischuk wins  
third blitz title**

**Bishop Studies**

IM Junta Ikeda



**The Petroff - Part 2**

IM Max Illingworth



**Pawn Endings**

FM Chris Wallis



# UPDATES

## RESIGNATION

November 8 saw the unveiling of a sculpture called Resignation, which has been placed next to Greenwich Baths in Sydney with a plaque as a tribute to John Purdy. John swam daily at the baths, which had been run by his mother Anne Purdy (Cecil Purdy's wife) and her mother before her. Greenwich was also the home of Sydney chess after World War II, with Anne and Cecil Purdy running a chess club there.

The sculpture, believed to be the first ever for a chess-player in Australia and the largest piece of public art in that part of Sydney, was created by John's son Michael and was exhibited at Sculpture By the Sea in Bondi before being moved to its permanent home next to Greenwich Baths.

Top photo: The plaque

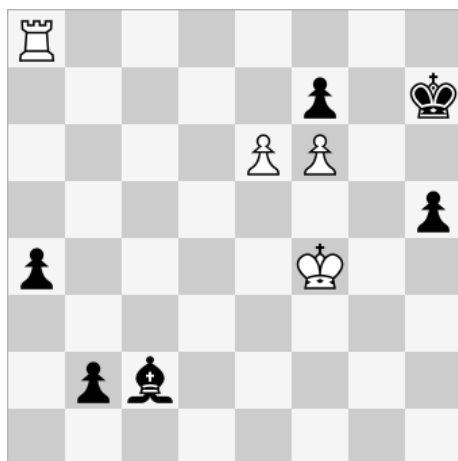
Bottom photo: From left: Michael Purdy, Lane Cove Mayor Deborah Hutchens, Colin Purdy (another of John's sons) and Felicity Purdy, John's widow.



## CRAZY ROOKS

Russia won gold in both the at Open and Women's sections at the European Teams Chess Championship in Reykjavik, but a position from the final round in the match Italy - Croatia caught our eye.

The idea of checking an opponent's king with a rook to force a draw in a position which would otherwise be stalemate is well-known, but Axel Rombaldoni took it a step further and used the idea to win his game against Zdenko Kozul and the match for Italy.



57. ♖h8!!

♔g6 58.

♖h6!

1-0

## IZZAT EDGES ILLINGWORTH AT HJORTH OPEN

Kanan Izzat won the 2015 Hjorth Open played over the Melbourne Cup long weekend at Melbourne Chess Club. Izzat scored 8.5/9, edging out last year's winner Max Illingworth by half a point. The decisive games occurred on the 3rd day, where Izzat beat Illingworth in the afternoon after earlier playing a short draw against James Morris, who finished third.

## CHESS BOXING

A very interesting new mix sport that is just as the name suggests. Being picked up by a few of the local Melbourne players. I believe there will also be a report on the Project in early December to keep an eye on. You can see some of the photos on their [facebook page](#).

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Max Illingworth looks at a popular antidote to 1.e4 for Black - the Petroff Defence. The second part to his series.



## ENDGAMES COLUMN - PAWN ENDINGS

Chris Wallis looks at some examples of complicated rook endings with many pawns



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See how you went with the skewer problems and studies!



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Andrew Brown takes a look at the relative value of pieces in the first part of his psychology column.

# CARLSEN RETAINS WORLD RAPID CHAMPIONSHIP. GRISCHUK WINS BLITZ

BY GM IAN ROGERS  
PHOTOS BY CATHY ROGERS

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Until 2014, the World Blitz Championship had been held sporadically, with fields which often excluded some of the best blitz players in favour of big names in classical chess.

World Rapid Championships were even rarer and more random, with the title correspondingly devalued.

However last year FIDE brought the two events together in Dubai, made the event a Swiss system with equitable rating-based access for players around the world and suddenly the World Rapid and Blitz Championship had become one of the most popular events on the chess calendar.

The 2015 Championships had internet audiences comparable to the classical World Championship, out-rating online audience for an elite event such as Wijk aan Zee by a factor of five.

World Champion Magnus Carlsen was, as usual, hot favourite, having won both events in Dubai and with his traditional fast chess rival Hikaru Nakamura away at Millionaire Chess in Las Vegas.

From the players' point of view, 36 rounds over five days is no walk in the park, but with considerable financial rewards – 30,000 Euros first in each event – almost 150 Grandmasters turned up at Berlin's Bolle Meierei to try their luck.

Berlin seemed like an ideal place to host both tournaments, a city with 100 chess clubs and a strong chess administrative structure.

However warning signs started flashing when the tournament's organising body, AGON, declined offers of help from the local chess community; for example refusing the offer to hold a Lasker exhibition alongside the tournament.

On the first day of the competition more than 1,000 spectators paid 9 Euros to watch the first day and, regrettably, many left disappointed, vowing not to return.

The main complaint was an inability to watch any games.

The tournament hall was laid out poorly so that only a small percentage of the games would be visible and the top four boards were placed on a stage, making it almost impossible for a spectator, even one in the front row, to see what was happening. In the playing hall no matches below the four top boards had name tags, so the crowd had to guess who they were watching (when they could get close enough to the ropes to see anything). Often a game would finish and the result could only be guessed at.

Needless to say, there were no screens displaying the games; this was clearly too difficult and expensive for the organisers.

If spectators decided that battling the crowds in the playing hall was too much, they could move to the commentary area, only to discover that German GM Jan Gustafsson was giving his internet commentary only in English. Worse, the commentary room had only 50 chairs, and some elderly spectators were seen heading home when unable to find a seat.

When watching a tournament on the internet is far superior to seeing the games live – and paying for the privilege, it is clear that the organisers have their priorities warped. Spectator numbers dropped after the first day, though not enough to enable easy viewing of the games.

From a chess point of view, both tournaments were outstanding, with brilliancies, blunders and plenty of drama. It's just a pity that the chess fans who made the trek to Berlin could not see them.





Above: The playing hall of the World Blitz and Rapid  
Below: Anand had an event he would rather forget





# WORLD RAPID CHAMPIONSHIPS

Carlsen proved once again just how strong he is at the 20 minute plus 10 seconds increment time limit, winning his second World Rapid title, in 2015 without losing a game.

Carlsen scored 4/5 on each of the first two days and could even afford some short draws on the final day, nonetheless finishing a point clear of the chasing pack.

Carlsen's recipe was simple; "I didn't blunder much and I usually took the opportunities when they were there. And I usually had more time."

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

**Wagner, Dennis** 2575

Berlin World Rapid



Most players would try to make 38.h6+ or 38.♖xe6 work but Carlsen finds a far simpler and stronger plan.

**38.♖g6+! ♗xg6 39.hxg6 ♕xd4**  
39...♗xg6 loses to 40.♗xd5

**40.♖xe6 ♖xe6 41.♖xe6 ♕c5**  
**42.♗xd5 ♖a4 43.b4! ♕f8 44.♖f6!**  
There is no defence against  
**45.♖f7+.** **1-0**

**Vallejo Pons, F** 2684

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

Berlin World Rapid



Vallejo's control of the a-file balances Carlsen's nebulous chances on the kingside and after a cautious move such as 36.♖a2, preparing to answer 36...f5 with 37.♖f2!, it would be unlikely that Carlsen could win. Instead Vallejo gives Carlsen a tactical shot, and he takes it at the first opportunity.

**36.♖a5? ♕xh3!! 37.gxh3 ♖xh3+**  
**38.♗e1 ♖g3+ 39.♗d2 h3! 40.♖c7**  
**♖g6**

Remarkably, the h-pawn cannot be stopped.

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

**Dubov, Daniil** 2661

Berlin World Rapid

**41.♕c2 h2 42.e5 ♖g2+ 43.♔c1**  
**h1=♖+ 44.♔b2 ♖h5 45.♖xd6+**  
**♗g8 46.♖e7!? ♖xc2+! 47.♗xc2**  
**♖xe7**

**0-1**

Only in one game was Carlsen in dire straits, against the young Russian Daniil Dubov.



Dubov's fine exchange sacrifice has left Black dominating the board, and had Black found 33...♗e5!!, then the game would soon be over. Instead Dubov preferred **33...♗f4? 34.♖bc1 ♖e4 35.♗h1 ♖e3?!** Now Black gets into trouble.

After 35...♕b7! Black's rook stays on the board and White remains under pressure.

36. ♖h4! f6 37. ♜c8! ♜xc8

38. ♜xc8+ ♕f7 39. ♜c7+ Playing safe.

39. ♖h7! was a reasonable winning try, though after 39... ♗xg2+ 40. ♖h2 e5! it seems that the Black king can escape.

39... ♗g8 40. ♜c8+ ♕f7 41. ♜c7+ ♕g8 42. ♜c8+

1/2-1/2

Ian Nepomniachtchi, the player who ran Carlsen so close in the 2014 World Blitz Championship, took out the silver medal. An upset loss at the end of the second day to Sergey Zhigalko cost Nepomniachtchi any chance for gold but he came back strongly on the third day, with the following 13th round game being his most spectacular

**Nepomniachtchi, Ian** 2705

**Savchenko, Boris** 2567

Berlin World Rapid

1.e4 c5 2. ♘f3 g6 3.c3 ♗g7 4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 d5 6.e5 ♗g4 7. ♗b5+ ♘c6 8.h3 ♗xf3 9. ♖xf3 ♜c8



This line has a good reputation for Black, with the d4 pawn a possible long term weakness. However Nepomniachtchi finds an unusual plan, looking for activity at any cost and creates a new version of the Milner-Barry Gambit.

10.O-O e6 11. ♖a3!? ♖b6



12. ♘c3! ♖xd4 13. ♗e3 ♖xe5 14. ♗c5!?

This is a little too creative. After 14. ♜ad1!, threatening 15. ♗d4, White has a huge initiative and can meet 14... ♖c7 with 15. ♘xd5!! exd5 16. ♜fe1 with a winning attack, e.g. 16... ♘e7 17. ♗f4! ♖d7 18. ♜xd5!

and the game is over.

14...a6! 15. ♜fe1 ♖g5 16. ♗xc6+ ♜xc6 17. ♜ad1 ♘e7 18. ♖b4!



18...a5?

This runs into a brilliant refutation. Savchenko may have rejected 18... ♜xc5! 19. ♖xc5 O-O because of 20. ♘e4! but then 20...b6! leaves Black on top.

19. ♖xb7! ♜xc5 20. ♘e4! ♖h4 The point behind Nepomniachtchi's play is that 20...dxe4 allows 21. ♖d7+ ♕f8 22. ♖d8#

21.g3 ♖xh3 22. ♘xc5 ♘f5

22...O-O 23. ♖xe7 is also hopeless.

23. ♖d7+

1-0

### World Rapid Championships Leading final scores:

1. Carlsen (Nor) 11.5/15;

=2. Nepomniachtchi (Rus), Radjabov (Aze), Dominguez (Cub) 10.5.



# WORLD BLITZ CHAMPIONSHIPS

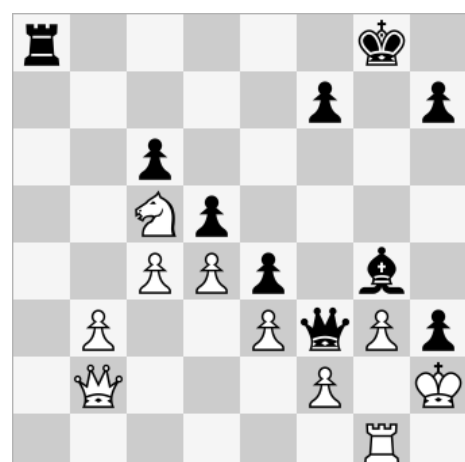
The blitz event saw two days where fortunes swung dramatically. After 21 rounds Alexander Grischuk had won his third World Blitz title, following his victories in 2006 and 2012, but it was Carlsen's meltdown on the second day that attracted the most attention.

On the first day Carlsen and Vachier-Lagrave battled for the lead, both racing to 9/10 before Carlsen lost his final game, allowing Vachier-Lagrave to edge half a point ahead at the end of the day.

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

**Karjakin, Sergey** 2762

Berlin World Blitz



Carlsen is already in desperate trouble, but Karjakin misses chance after chance to finish the game in spectacular style **31...♔g7**

31...♔a1!! is a winning decoy idea.

**32.cxd5 cxd5**

32...♔a1!! still wins.

**33.b4 ♖b8**

33...♔a1!! again.

**34.♘a6 ♜b6 35.♘c7**



**35...♜xb4**

Finally Karjakin sees a decoy idea but at this moment he had a far more beautiful way to finish the game; 35...♔h6!! with the point that 36.♘xd5 walks into 36...♔g2+!! 37.♜xg2 hxg2+ 38.♔xg2 ♕f3+ and mate next move.

**36.♔a2 ♜a4** Did anyone need a reminder that 36...Rb1!! wins?

**37.♔b2 ♜a5**

The rest of the game is a bit of an anti-climax, but Karjakin eventually falls over the finish line to defeat the World Champion.

**38.♘e8+ ♔g6 39.♘c7 h5 40.♔c2**

**♔h7 41.♔b2 ♔f6 42.♜c1 ♔f3 43.♜g1 ♔f5 44.♜c1 ♜a7 45.♘e8 ♔f3 46.♜g1 ♜a6 47.♔c2 ♜e6**

**0-1**

The next day Carlsen not only self-destructed, he showed some of the worst behaviour seen by a top player in recent times.

A loss to Teimour Radjabov in round 13 finished with mild pen abuse but it was a key game two rounds later against eventual winner Grischuk which caused Carlsen to explode. After resigning Carlsen spun on his heels, punched his hand and cried out "Faen!", a strong Norwegian swear word. More pen abuse followed.

**Radjabov, Teimour** 2738

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

Berlin World Blitz





Gelfand in a difficult spot against Grischuk

**22...♖d6? 23.♖b3**

Radjabov misses the chance for 23.♖xe4! fxe4 ( 23...f6 is well met by 24.c5! )

24.♖xf7+ ♔h8 25.♖xe8+! ♖xe8 26.♘f7+, winning.

**23...♙xe5 24.dxe5 ♖c6**

24...♖e6 was much safer.

**25.♖e3 ♖cd8 26.f3 ♘c5 27.e6! ♘d3**

A tough decision, though after the braver 27...♖xe6 it turns out White has nothing better than a draw after 28.♖h6! f6 29.♙xf6 ♖xf6 30.♖e7 ♖f7 31.♖xf7 ♔xf7 32.♖xh7+ ♔f8

**28.♖d1 ♘f4?!**

28...f4 was necessary.

**29.♖ee1**

29.♖ed2 was even stronger, with the point that after 29...♖xd2 30.♖xd2 ♖c5 31.♖xc5 bxc5 32.e7! Black is tied in knots.

**29...♖xd1 30.♖xd1 ♘xe6?**

Now White's attack along the long diagonal proves decisive.

Carlsen had to try 30...♖c5 because after 31.♖xc5 bxc5 32.e7 Black can at least force a rook ending with 32...♘e2+! 33.♔f2 ♘d4 though even here White has serious winning chances.

**31.♖c3! f6 32.♖xf6 ♖f8**

**33.♖h8+ ♔f7 34.♖xh7+ ♔e8 35.♖xg6+ ♔e7 36.♔h1 ♖xc4 37.♙e5 ♖f7 38.♙d6+ ♔e8 39.♖g8+ ♘f8 40.♙xf8 ♖e2 41.♙b4+**

**1-0**

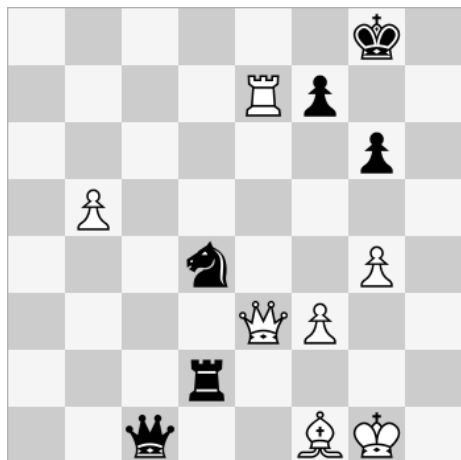
While Carlsen was imploding, Vachier-Lagrave firmly established himself and with five rounds to go his lead had extended to one and a half points over the field and two over Carlsen who seemed to have all but given up.



**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

**Grischuk, Alexander** 2774

Berlin World Blitz



Grischuk had been pushing hard but here missed the spectacular 38...Qe1!! which would likely have won in short order.

Instead play continued 38...  
 ♖e2+?! ( 38...♔e1!! )

39.♔g2 ♜f4+ 40.♔g3! ♜e6  
 41.♚e8+?! ♔h7 42.♚e5??

Here, or more simply last move, Carlsen could have secured a draw via 42.Rxe6 fxe6 43.Qxe6 but Carlsen has missed Grischuk's winning response.

42...♜g7! 43.♚g2 ♜xe8  
 43...♚g1! was immediately 0-1  
 44.♚xe8 ♚c7+ 45.♔h3 ♜g7  
 46.♚e3 ♚d6 47.b6 ♚b2  
 48.♚c3+ ♚f6 49.♚xf6+ ♔xf6  
 50.f4 ♚xb6 51.♚d5 ♚d6  
 52.g5+ ♔f5 53.♚xf7 ♔xf4  
 54.♔h4 ♔f5

In this position Carlsen resigned, performed a strange dance of frustration and swore, making it clear that he regarded his title hopes as effectively over.

**0-1**



**Left:**

A game which left Carlsen displaying some unusually bad behaviour

**Vachier-Lagrave, M** 2758

**Movsesian, S** 2658

Berlin World Blitz



Vachier-Lagrave has set up the seemingly unstoppable threat of 29. ♖xh5 and Movsesian decides he can do nothing better than grab material.

**28... ♖xc3?**

Missing the surprising defence 28... Nf4! with the point that after 29. Bxf4 exf4 30. Bxh5 Black can kill the g5 pawn and kill the attack via 30... Qc5+!

**29. ♖xh5! ♖xa1+ 30. ♖f2 ♘f4  
31. ♖xf4 ♖xe4 32. ♖e2**

**1-0**

However Vachier-Lagrave suddenly lost two consecutive games to leave four players tied for first with two rounds to play and Carlsen sitting just

behind them. However a new disappointment followed for the World Champion; Carlsen allowing himself to be mated by Vassily Ivanchuk.

Carlsen was clearly disgusted with himself again, though his attempt to throw his pen at the table was half-hearted.

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2850

**Ivanchuk, Vassily** 2726

Berlin World Blitz



Ivanchuk's attack is the stronger of the two and after 37... ♖d4 Carlsen would have no defence. However Ivanchuk preferred **37... ♖f1** after which 38. ♖xf1 would leave the game quite unclear but which instead provoked the horrible blunder **38. ♖d2??** allowing **38... ♖g1+** which Ivanchuk played with a flourish. **0-1** The Norwegian media had come to Berlin in force, with two television stations and

two newspapers sending teams to cover the Championships, and they were stunned.

In truth Carlsen's mini-tantrums harmed only his image, since his games were over when the incidents occurred and neighbouring games seemed unaffected.

Carlsen later expressed regret for his behaviour, saying "I realise that it looks stupid to storm out like a moron, but I could not keep a cool head."

The main conclusion to be drawn was that Carlsen is becoming increasingly frustrated with his inability to return to his form of 2014 which took him to record ratings in all forms of the game.

Since April Carlsen has had three mediocre results from four tournaments and seems unable to dig himself out of a hole once he loses a game.

While Carlsen and Vachier-Lagrave were misfiring, Grischuk and Kramnik zoomed past. Kramnik could not beat Ivanchuk in the final round which meant that Grischuk, who scored a comfortable win against Gelfand, was World Blitz Champion for the third time.





Another game which didn't go Carlsen's way

**Tomashevsky, Evgeny** 2758

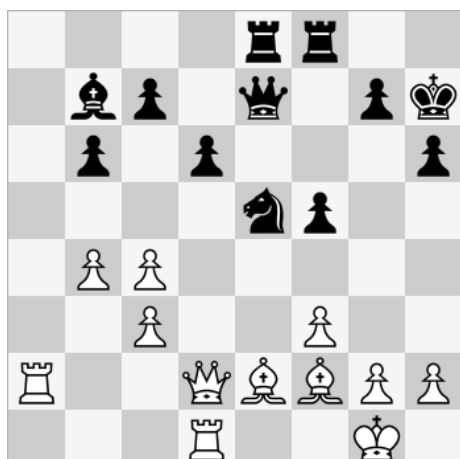
**Grischuk, Alexander** 2774

Berlin World Blitz

Tomashevsky has a small edge with his bishop pair, and after 23.Ra7 Grischuk would have to start defending with 23...Rb8 because 23...Bc6 runs into 24.Bxb6.

And now the losing move...  
**30...f4! 31.♖xg6+ ♘xg6**  
**32.♙xc4 fxg3 33.hxg3 ♘e5**  
 and Grischuk converted his extra piece 37 moves later.

**0-1**



However Tomashevsky decided to play for more.

**23.c5!? dxc5 24.bxc5 bxc5**  
**25.♖e1 ♙d6 26.♗c2 c4**  
**27.Rd1 ♙g6 28.♙g3 Re7**  
**29.♗h1**

Heading in the wrong direction. After 29.♗b1 White has enough for the pawn.

**29...♖fe8 30.♖aa1?**

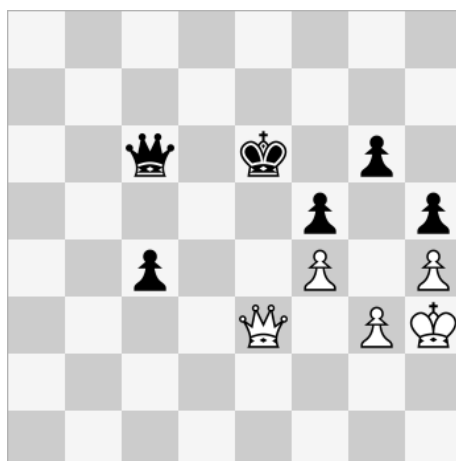
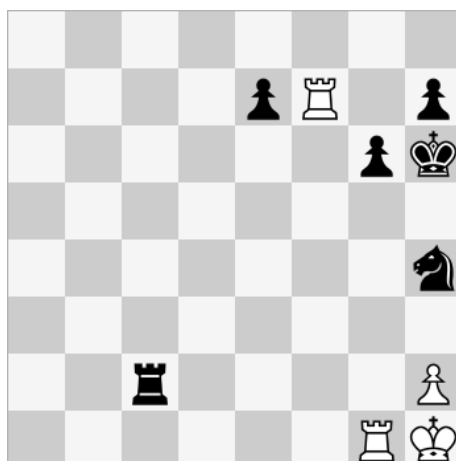


**Left:**  
Nepomniachtchi  
plays a great posi-  
tional game against  
Radjabov

**Kramnik, Vladimir** 2777  
**Dubov, Daniil** 2661  
Berlin World Blitz

**Dominguez Perez, L** 2732  
**Perunovic, Milos** 2622  
Berlin World Blitz

**Anand, Viswanathan** 2803  
**Socko, Bartosz** 2599  
Berlin World Blitz



Everything is a draw, except...  
**42. ♖xe7?? ♜f3!**

**0-1**

Another example in the series  
'Ways not to win queen end-  
ings' ... **64... ♔d5?? 65. ♚e5#**

**1-0**



Anand, once the fastest player in the world, had two tournaments to forget in Berlin. This was a rare bright moment.

**14...♔c5?**

14...♔e7 is passive but Black's position holds together.

**15.♙xe6! fxe6 16.♙xe6+ ♔e7  
17.♙c4! ♙f7 18.♚fe1+ ♔f8  
19.♙b4+ ♔g8 20.♘g5 ♙f6  
21.♚e8+ ♘f8 22.♚dd8**

22.♚xf8+ was not bad either!

**1-0**

Grischuk explained his success as follows; "I played [poorly on the first day] but today something changed in me; somehow I was really concentrated. I didn't speak to anyone between the games, remained concentrated and I played really well, I think."

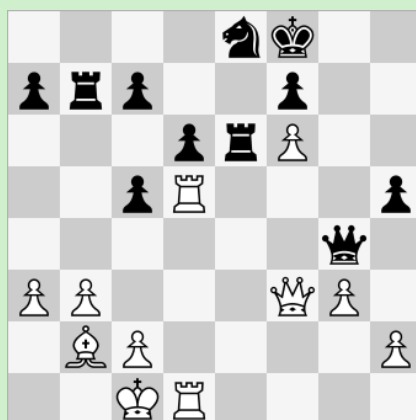
"Can't win them all (apparently)" was Carlsen's modest tweet that evening.

### World Rapid Championships Leading Final Scores:

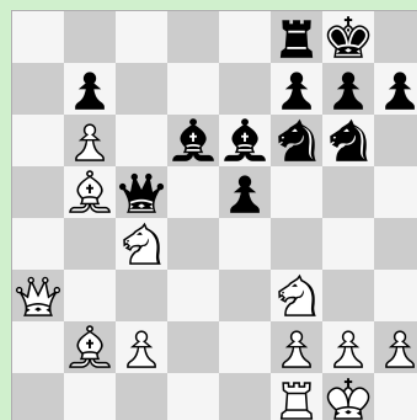
**1.** Grischuk(Rus) 15.5/21;  
**=2.** Vachier-Lagrave(Fra),  
Kramnik(Rus) 15;  
**=4.** Ivanchuk(Ukr),  
Nepomniachtchi(Rus) 14.5.

## WORLD RAPID AND BLITZ QUIZ

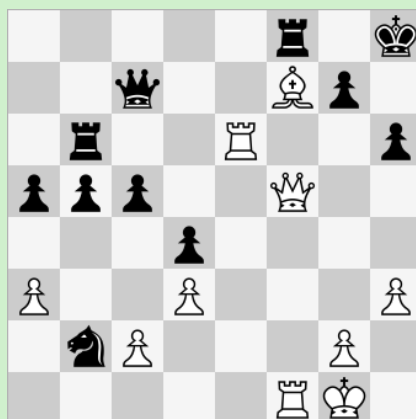
Solutions are on page 51 and provided in the PGN file



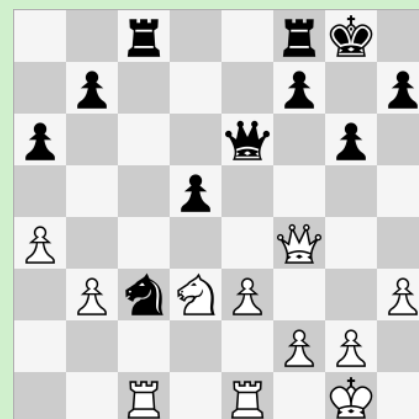
**1. White to move and win**



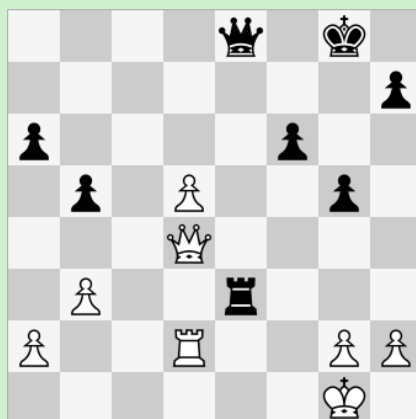
**2. Black to move and win**



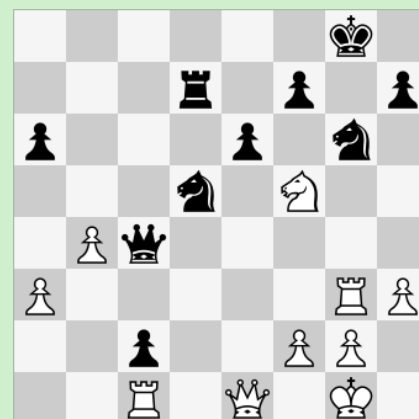
**3. White to move and win**



**4. Black to move and win**



**5. Black to move and win**



**6. White to move and win**



Above: The award ceremony for the Rapid and Blitz  
Below: Press conference before the closing





# 2016 Australian Junior Championships

[www.ajcc.org.au](http://www.ajcc.org.au)

**U18 & U 16 Open:** Saturday 16th - Sunday 24th January

**U10 & U8 Open:** Saturday 16th - Monday 18th January

**Problem Solving and Lightning:** Tuesday 19th January

**U14 & U12 Open:** Wednesday 20th - Sunday 24th January

**U18, U16, U14 & U12 Girls:** Wednesday 20th - Sunday 24th January

**U10 Girls and U8 Girls:** Friday 22nd - Sunday 24th January



## Walford

Held at Walford Anglican School for Girls

16 Unley road, Hyde Park

*Onsite boarding opportunities available*

Hosted by the South Australian Junior Chess League



# 15 IN 15

**THE POSITIONS THAT DEFINED THE CHESS YEAR  
BY IAN ROGERS**

THE YEAR 2015 FEATURED EVERYTHING A CHESS FAN COULD WANT - GREAT GAMES, HORRIBLE BLUNDERS, CHEATING SCANDALS AND OTHER DRAMAS.

HERE ARE THE 15 POSITIONS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE AUTHOR DEFINED THE YEAR.



# 1

**Ly, Moulthun** 2462

**Ni Hua** 2690

Australian Open 2015 (10)

Ni Hua won the 2015 Australian Open with a wonderful 10.5/11 but his victory could have been a much closer-run matter had Moulthun Ly taken his chances in the penultimate round. Ni had been winning but had allowed matters to get totally out of control and Black's position hangs by a thread.



In the game White played **51. ♖e5**

**51...g3! 52. b8=♔**

52. ♖xd7 ♕f3! forces mate.

**52... ♖xb8 53. ♔xb8 ♔f2+!** Black was winning and the game concluded **54. ♕g1 ♔xf6 55. ♔e8 ♔a6 56. ♔e7+ ♕g8 57. ♔e8+ ♕g7 58. ♔e7+ ♕f6 59. ♔f7+ ♕g5 60. ♔f1 h3**

Only later did Ly discover that **51. ♔d6!! ♖b8 52. ♔d8!** would have decided the game in his favour, e.g. **52... g3 53. ♔xb8 ♕f3 54. ♔h8+ ♕g6 55. ♖e5+!** when White escapes mate and wins.

**0-1**

# 2

**Li Chao b** 2728

**Gabrielian, Artur** 2551

Cappelle Open 2015 (5.5)



Chinese GM Li Chao had a tremendous year, despite being black-banned by the Chinese Chess Federation. He won a series of European opens and moved into the world's top 15. Here, on the way to winning the huge Cappelle la Grande Open in France, Li Chao had to survive one of the most remarkable opening ideas of the year, from his Armenian opponent Artur Gabrielian.

**10... ♖b6!** Allowing White's d pawn to run riot but Gabrielian doesn't care.

**11. dxc6+ ♖xb3 12. cxb7! ♖b6! 13. bxa8= ♖c6 14. ♖a4 ♖b5!**

**14... ♖c7 15. ♖xf8+ Kxf8 16. Nxc5** is better for White.

**15. ♕xc6 ♕xc6 16. ♖xa7 ♖xe2** White has kept his extra rook, but his light squares are so weak that Li must return material immediately.

**17. ♖b6** Intending to meet **17... ♖f3?** with **18. ♖b3+.**

**17.f3?** would walk into mate after **17... ♖g4!**

**17... ♖e4 18.f3 ♖xa4 19. ♖b3+**

19. ♖xc5 would be too risky after 19... ♗e4!

19... ♖xb3 20. axb3 ♖b8



The excitement is over and because of White's weak pawns Black should hold easily. However Li somehow ground out a win after another 42 moves.

21. ♖a7 ♗d5 22. ♗f4 ♖d4+ 23. ♖g2 ♗xf4+ 24. ♖xf4 e5 25. ♖h6 ♖b7 26. ♖xb7 ♖xb7 27. ♖a1 e4 28. fxe4 ♖xe4+ 29. ♖f1 ♖xb2 30. ♖d1 ♖d4 31. b4 ♖c2 32. ♖d2 ♖a4 33. ♖g2 ♖f7 34. ♖h3 ♖b5 35. bxc5 ♖xc5 36. ♖d1 ♖e6 37. ♖g5 ♖d6 38. ♖e1+ ♖f7 39. ♖b1 ♖d7 40. ♖b7 ♖e6 41. ♖b6 ♖d5 42. ♖h4 ♖c6 43. ♖a6 h5 44. ♖b6 ♖d7 45. ♖b7 ♖e6 46. ♖a7 ♖e8 47. ♖d8 ♖c5 48. ♖b7 ♖a3 49. ♖b1 ♖c6 50. ♖a1 ♖b4 51. ♖a6 ♖d5 52. ♖g5 ♖e8 53. ♖a2 ♖e6 54. ♖h6 ♖c5 55. ♖g5 ♖d4 56. ♖h7 ♖f7 57. ♖a6 ♖f8 58. ♖e6 ♖c3 59. ♖f4 ♖f7 60. ♖xg6 h4 61. gxh4 ♖b5 62. h5

1-0

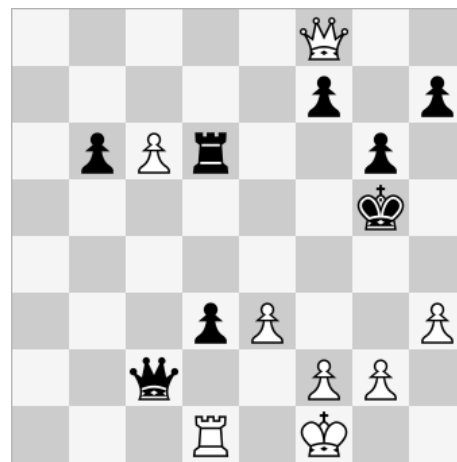
Khismatullin, D. 2653

Eljanov, P. 2727

Jerusalem EUR Ch. 2015

3

The most amazing move of the year came in the European Championships and was played by the young Russian Denis Khismatullin on his way to a career highlight, tying for second place.



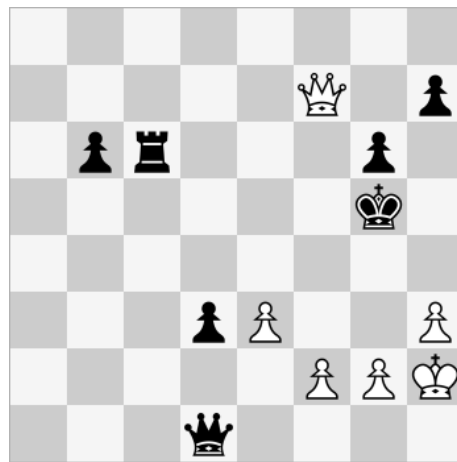
44. ♖g1!!

"You have to be kidding me!" as John McEnroe would say. Khismatullin later admitted that he also took some convincing that he could give a rook away with check and not look stupid later!

44... ♖xd1+

In a way Khismatullin's suspicions that he shouldn't be winning by force were justified - the computer-like 44... ♖d5! turns out to hang on, albeit barely.

45. ♖h2 ♖xc6 46. ♖e7+ ♖h6 47. ♖f8+ ♖g5 48. ♖xf7!



48... ♖f6

Returning the rook is the only way to avoid immediate mate, but Black's king remains in its net and a few more accurate moves finish off Black.

49. f4+ ♖h6 50. ♖xf6 ♖e2 51. ♖f8+ ♖h5 52. ♖g7! h6 53. ♖e5+ ♖h4 54. ♖f6+ ♖h5 55. f5! gxf5 56. ♖xf5+ ♖h4 57. ♖g6 1-0



# 4

**Muzychuk, Mariya** 2526  
**Koneru, Humpy** 2581  
 Sochi Women's WC KO 2015



Muzychuk was only in a position to take the match from Koneru because of another great swindle earlier in the match. Prior to the quarter-finals, Koneru had won every game and in the diagrammed position was aiming for her seventh straight win. However Muzychuk has whipped up some counterplay on the kingside for her lost pawn and Koneru must be careful.

35... ♖d1 would be safe enough, although 36. ♕e2 should hold, but Koneru incautiously played **25...f6?** only to be hit by the stunning reply **26. ♕d2!!** when it turns out that Black has no defence.

The game concluded **26... ♖f8 27. ♕d5+ ♕xd5 28. ♕xd5+ ♖h8 29. ♕f7!**

**1-0**

# 5

**Koneru, Humpy** 2581  
**Muzychuk, Mariya** 2526  
 Sochi Women's WC KO 2015



A position which will haunt Humpy Koneru for years to come. The Indian had completely outplayed Maria Muzychuk and is only a few moves away from qualifying for the Women's World Championship semi-finals.

**35. ♕c1??** Chess is a cruel game.

Almost any move of the e1 rook would win - 35. ♖ed1, 35. ♖f1 or 35. ♖b1 should all force resignation in a few moves.

**35... ♘d3!!** ...whereas now resignation is also forced, but it is Koneru, not Muzychuk, who has to fly home from Sochi.

**36. ♕d8 ♖xe1+ 37. ♕xe1 ♕c5+ 38. ♖f1 ♘xe1 39. ♖xe1 ♕c1+ 40. ♖e2 ♕a6+ 41. ♖e3 ♕e1+** Muzychuk went on to win the final against Natalia Pogonina and take the FIDE Women's World Championship title.

**0-1**

6

7

Zhou, Weiqi

Izzat, Kanan

Doeberl Cup 2015



The zugzwang of the year, with multiple pieces on the board...

22. ♖xd5! exd5 23. ♜xc7! ♜xc7 24. ♞c5!



Black can only move his pawns and when those moves run out, he will lose a whole rook.

1-0

Petrosian, TL. 2671

Nigalidze, G. 2566

Dubai Open 2015 (6.9)



The most dramatic of the cheating cases which blighted 2015. Twice Georgian Champion Gaoiz Nigalidze was having another great tournament at the powerful Dubai Open but his opponent was suspicious that he was visiting the toilet after almost every move. A body search found nothing but then the arbiter checked the cubicle into which Nigalidze had been disappearing. He found a well hidden smartphone logged in to Nigalidze's name.

The Georgian was thrown out of the tournament and new anti-cheating measures were implemented at major events such as the World Cup.

1-0



# 8

**So, Wesley** 2788

**Akopian, V** 2622

St Louis US Champs 2015 (9.4)



An innocuous-looking opening position it seems, but one which split the chess world into those who believed arbiters were not God, and arbiters. In this position, from the ninth round of the US Championship and with Wesley So within striking range of the leader, former Doeberl Cup winner Varuzhan Akopian played a winning move - he approached the arbiter Tony Rich and pointed out that So had been writing message to himself on a sheet of paper underneath his scoresheet.

Since So had already been warned twice for writing notes Rich forfeited So and sent the internet humming with debates about player stupidity and arbiter over-each. Consensus in Saint Louis was that Rich made the right call and that Akopian did his fellow professionals a favour by calling out a bad habit of So's.

0-1

# 9

**Anand, Viswanathan** 2791

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2863

Shamkir Gashimov 2015 (1)



The position which showed that Magnus Carlsen is human and provided a small indication that all was not well in 2015 with the World Champion.

**19...♔d7??** A terrible oversight, when 19...♔xd3 20. ♖e3 ♔c4 leaves Black in no danger. Carlsen saw the error immediately after he moved and had a painful 11 minute wait before Anand played... **20. ♘d5! f6!**

The only chance, because 20...♙xe1 - or any normal move with the bishop - loses to 21. ♘f6+! gxf6 22. ♔xf6

**21. ♘xb4 fxe5 22. ♔d5+ ♔xd5 23. ♘xd5 ♙xd3 24. ♖xe5 ♗fe8 25. ♖xe8+ ♗xe8**



26. ♖e3

26. ♜b4! would have won with minimal complications. In the event Carlsen scrambled a draw and went on to win the tournament by half a point from Anand as can be seen below. However this was Carlsen's only classical tournament win for the next seven months.

26... ♖c8 27. a3 a5 28. h4 ♙g6 29. ♖d1 b4 30. axb4 axb4 31. g4 b3 32. h5 ♙f7 33. ♙g2 ♙f8 34. ♙g3 ♖a8 35. ♖d2 h6 36. ♜f5 ♙e6 37. ♜d4 ♙f7 38. f3 ♖c8 39. ♙f4 Rc1 40. ♜f5 ♙g8 41. ♖d8+ ♙h7 42. ♖d7 ♙g8 43. ♖d8+ ♙h7 44. ♖d7 ♙g8 45. ♜d6 ♙e6 46. ♖e7 ♙d5 47. ♙f5 ♖c6 48. ♙e5 ♙xf3 49. ♜f5 g5 50. ♖g7+ ♙h8 51. ♖g6 ♙h7! 52. ♖g7+ ♙h8 53. ♖g6 ♙h7

1/2 - 1/2

10

Sandu, Mi 2300

Stefanova, A. 2512

EUR Womens Champs 2015



The combination which launched a witch hunt and showed that in 2015 fear of cheating was morphing into paranoia.

Sandu played 28. ♖b3+! ♙h8 29. c4!, trapping the queen, and soon won after 29... ♖xa5 30. ♖xa5 ♖xa5 31. ♙e3 ♖b8 32. c5 ♖xc5 33. ♙xc5 ♜xc5 34. ♖f7 ♖g8

35. ♖c4 ♜b7 36. ♖xb4 ♜d8 37. ♖c4

Following the game, her main rival in the tournament, Natalia Zhukova, created and spruiked a petition which suggested that Sandu had developed a new form of 'intelligent cheating' and demanded that her games be broadcast on delay. Though there was no evidence at all of cheating - Zhukova declined to ask for Sandu to be searched because she was (supposedly) too clever to be caught like that - apart from Sandu's 6/7 score, the tactic had its effect and an upset Sandu lost all her remaining games, handing the European Women's title to Zhukova.

1 - 0

11

Nisipeanu, Liviu-Dieter 2654

Caruana, Fabiano 2805

Dortmund GM



Fabiano Caruana's victory at the Dortmund super-tournament - his first tournament after transferring allegiance to the US - came after a very slow start and included the following brilliant final round victory. It seems as if White's threat of 28. ♜d4 will be enough to hold the balance but Caruana channels one of the greatest (and most debated) pawn promotion combinations, Ortueta-Sanz, to win in spectacular fashion...

27... a5! 28. ♜d4 axb4!! 29. ♜xc6 b3 30. ♖xc7 ♜d6!!

The fantastic point behind Caruana's play - the b pawn cannot be stopped.

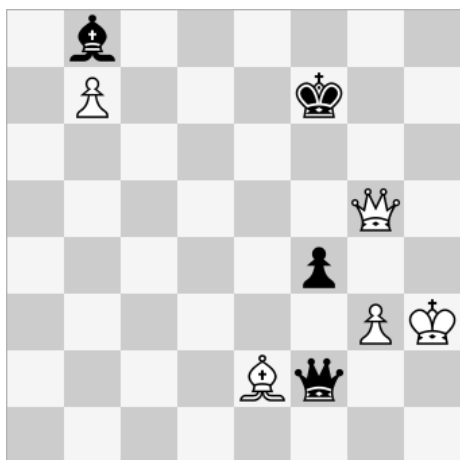


# 12

**Carlsen, Magnus** 2876

**Topalov, Veselin** 2798

Stavanger Norway Chess



The position which ruined Magnus Carlsen's year. Carlsen has a forced win but stared at the position for 70 seconds, waiting for his bonus 15 minutes of the final time control to kick in. As is now well known, the World Champion discovered that there was no final time control at move 60 and suffered a time forfeit which cost him this game and caused an almighty hangover from which he took months to recover.

0 - 1

# 13

**Navara, David** 2724

**Wojtaszek, Radoslaw** 2733

Biel GM 2015



The king march of the year, from the traditional tournament in Biel Switzerland.

20. ♖f2 ♙h4+ 21. ♖f3 e4+ 22. ♖f4 g5+ 23. ♖f5 ♜he8  
24. ♜hd1 ♜e5+ 25. ♖f6 ♜g8 26. bxc4 ♜g6+ 27. ♖xf7  
♜e7+ 28. ♖f8 ♜f6+ 29. ♖g8 ♜g6+ 30. ♖h8!



The triumph of Navara's 'steel king'. Amazingly White's king cannot be mated and the Czech Grandmaster went on to win after 30... ♜f6 31. ♜f1 ♙f2 32. ♜xf2 ♜xf2 33. ♜f1 ♜xg2 34. ♜f8+ ♖c7 35. ♙d5+ ♖d6 36. ♙xe7 ♖xc5 37. ♜f5+ ♖xc4 38. ♙xc6 bxc6 39. ♜xg5 ♜g3 40. h4 h6 41. ♜g6 ♜xe3 42. ♖g7 ♜g3 43. ♖xh6 e3 44. ♖g5 ♖d5 45. ♖f4 ♜h3 46. h5 c5 47. ♜g5+ ♖d4 48. ♜e5

The only sad postscript of this game is that later analysis showed that 24... ♙d3!!! would eventually lead to the demise of the brave White king. Damned computers - ruining another great piece of chess art!

1-0

# 14

Wei Yi 2724

Bruzon Batista, L. 2669

Hainan Danzhou GM



The combination of the year - many said it was the combination of the century - from 16-year-old Chinese star Wei Yi. Perhaps the first sacrifice was prepared at home - this position had been seen once before - but finding the path to victory, with its multiple quiet moves, one prefaced by a move repetition, was very much Wei's own work.

21. ♖d5! ♜xd5 22. ♖xf7!! ♜xf7 23. ♚h7+ ♜e6  
24. exd5+ ♜xd5



25. ♜e4+!! ♜xe4 26. ♚f7! ♜f6 27. ♜d2+ ♜d4 28. ♜e3+ ♜e4



29. ♚b3!! This is getting ridiculous - Black's king can run but it can't hide.

29... ♜f5 30. ♖f1+ ♜g4



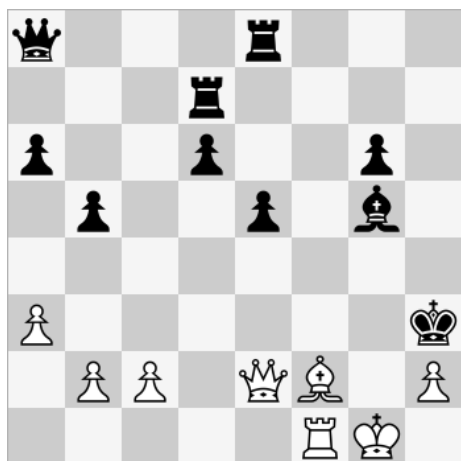
31. ♚d3! The last of the mysterious queen moves.

31... ♜xg2+

It would have been more fitting to allow the finish 31... Kh5 32. Qd1+ Kh4 33. Rf3! when another rook sacrifice ends the struggle.

32. ♜xg2 ♚a8+ 33. ♜g1 ♜g5 34. ♚e2+ ♜h4 35. ♜f2+ ♜h3





36. ♖e1!

Making sure that the wrong person doesn't checkmate!

1-0

From an epic playoff in October for the World Cup title, this position will be hard for Peter Svidler to forget. By now the players were in Game 9 of their match, after 4 classical games had been tied 2-2 and four rapid tiebreakers were also split 2-2. In the first of the blitz tiebreakers - with a \$32,000 prizemoney differential at stake - Svidler had played well and had a winning position as well as 40 seconds to his opponent's 4 (plus 3 second increments). Any normal move - 42... ♖e8 or 42... ♗e8 - would win without difficulty but Svidler played the ridiculous blunder 42... ♖g8?? 43. ♙xb8+

Svidler resigned, and lost the next game to miss the chance to be the second player to win the World Cup twice.

1 - 0

Karjakin, Sergey 2762

Svidler, Peter 2727

Baku World Cup KO (7.9)

# 15



# Bishop Studies

By IM Junta Ikeda

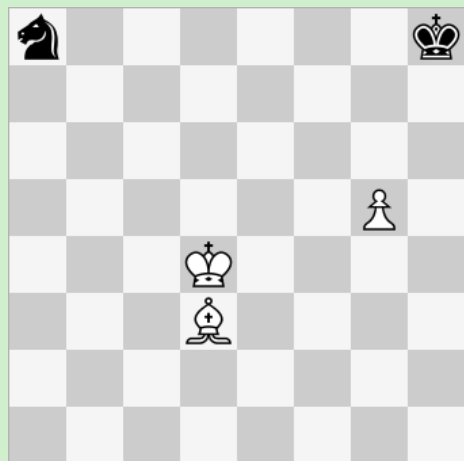
The theme for the studies in this issue is bishops – the stipulation is White to play and win in all six studies.

In practical play these days, we seem to hear about this piece most often in the context of the double bishops and their strength in the middlegame or endgame, or opposite-coloured bishop endgames; in these studies, the two bishops together are the focus, but we also see how potent they can be on their own, on their faithful colour of square, in the endgame. They are usually valued higher than knights, generally speaking, for their range in covering the whole battlefield at once. #1 by Zakhodyakin sees bishop vs. knight, and in #2 by Sumbatjan, bishop vs. rook; the other four sees the two bishops battling against different armies.

All of the studies are prize-winners in tourneys (with four claiming 1st Prize), so you can expect a delightful combination of beauty and creativity.

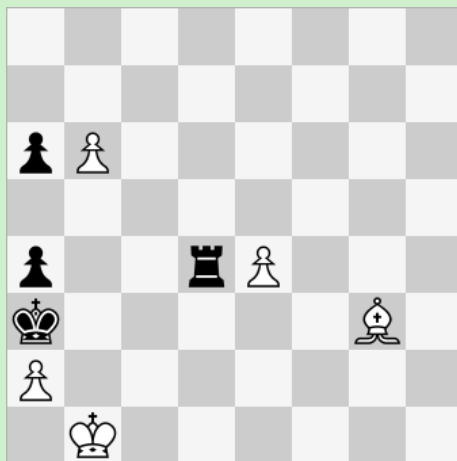
# Bishop Studies

Solutions page 64



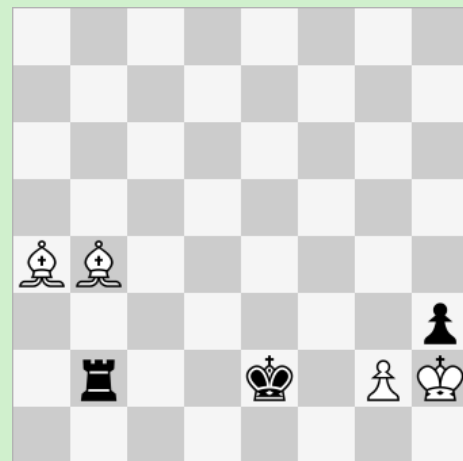
## 1. Zakhodyakin, G - 1st Prize

64, 1931



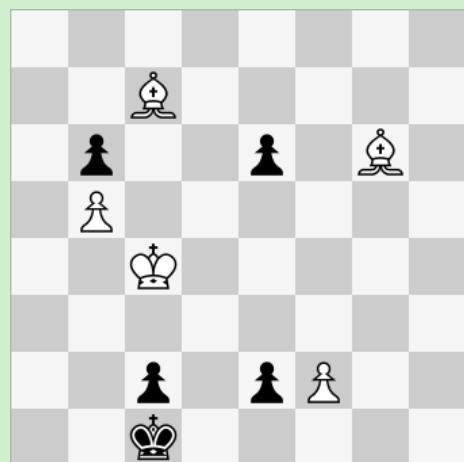
## 2. Sumbatjan, K - Special Honourable Mention

Shakmaty v SSSR, 1987



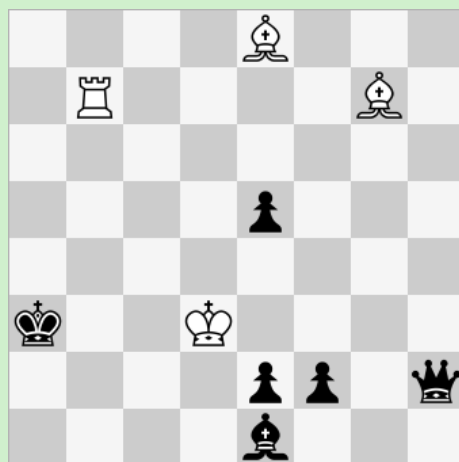
## 3. Gorgiev, T - 1st Prize

Tidskrift f^r Schack, 1968



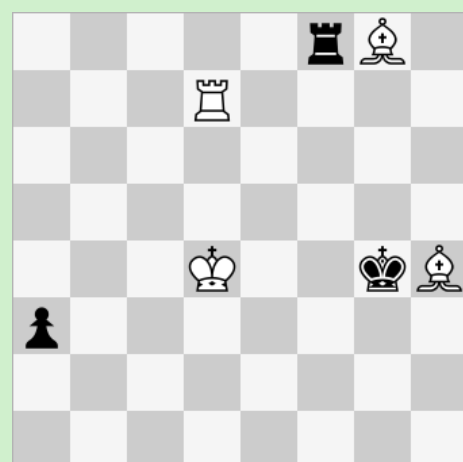
## 4. Kubbel, L - 1st Prize

Shakhmaty, 1924



## 5. Kirillov.V & Ryabinin.N - 2nd Prize

Uralskye Skazy, 1991



## 6. Petrov, D - 1st Prize

M. I. Chigorin Memorial  
Tourney, 1958



# AUSTRALIA AT THE WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY ADRIAN CHEW LEE AND EUNICE KOH



The 2015 World Youth Chess Championships were held in Halkidiki, Greece, starting at the end of October. As a team Australia performed beyond expectations with stand-out performances from Justin Tan & Rishi Sardana.

To reach Halkidiki was a 2 hour bus journey from Thessaloniki Airport to Australia's designated hotel – not the chess venue at Porto Carras but the Hotel Legomandra. (Unfortunately!!)

Our late registration and a record entry led to the Australian team being allocated accommodation at a hotel 10km from the venue, together with other countries with a relatively small number of players such as South Africa, Sri Lanka, Namibia and Lebanon. Shuttles were only available during specified times and exacerbated the disadvantages.

Max Chew Lee decided the conditions at the Australian hotel weren't to his liking so he defected to the Japanese team at Porto Carras for 5 days! (His friend Gary Lin had moved to Japan in January and changed federations.)

After lunch on day one, everyone assembled for photos before taking the bus to Porto Carras. It was chaos as usual for a World Youth Championships. The tournaments were split into three playing areas. The older children – U/18 to U/14 were in the Olympic Hall while the U/8s had a separate playing hall from the U/10s and U/12s. The signage was not clear & there was lots of scrabbling looking for board numbers.

The opening ceremony was almost non-existent - no performances or any speeches of significance - and then at 14:55 parents were asked

to leave the hall and the games started at 3 pm.

As in other recent World Youth Championships, there were no areas available for spectators, so parents and coaches had to be outside the playing hall wondering how their child was faring with no information. They also did not let the parents wait in the foyer of the venue with security chasing parents away.

Players and parents not staying at the Porto Carras resort had to hang around the venue until at least 5pm before the return shuttles began running. In addition, as the sun set, parents and coaches were stuck outside the playing hall freezing. It was just ridiculous of the organisers to not provide somewhere for the parents to shelter from the cold.

It must be noted that the entire region closes down outside the tourist season, so two weeks at a satellite hotel with nothing to do made for a very long stay, with none of the day tours, golf, tennis, bowling, etc, that were laid on for those at the main venue.

The team, competitors, coach and accompanying persons got on really well and were all very supporting of each other.

Team coach Lubomir Ftacnik again did a fantastic job with his charges: Justin Tan, Max and Alanna Chew Lee, James Kay and Atlas Baillieu. Lubomir again proved his worth, not only with his coaching but in his ability to communicate to the parents and being a great conversationalist as well.

# A Typical day for them might be...

**8:00-10:00** Breakfast

**10:00-11:30** Preparation with Lubomir Ftacnik (individual and group work)

**12:00-13:00** Lunch

**13:00-14:00** Relaxation & revision of preparation.

**14:15** Shuttle to Porto Carras

**14:30-15:00** Arrive at venue and wait for round to start - another disadvantage, as those staying at the resort could leave their rooms minutes before the round started.

**15:00-18:00** Compete

**18:00** Shuttle back to hotel (If a game finished quickly players would have to wait around for parents to show up; if slowly, parents froze waiting for their kids.)

**18:30-19:30** Review and analysis of game with Ftacnik

**19:30-20.30** Dinner

**20:30** Relaxation, bedtime

Next year the World Youth Championships are being split into two; Youth (U/18 to U/14) and Cadets (U/12 to U/8) events. Obviously the size of the event and the numbers have caused accommodation and logistics issues, but I suspect that there may be unintended consequences including:

- If Australia sends a team to each event, but each team is half the size... say 5 competitors... and only 2 or 3 of the competitors choose to use the team coach, the cost of a coach becomes prohibitive.
- Forcing parents with children in both Youth and Cadets to choose between the events (due to leave/timing/cost issues) or not applying for either event to be fair on their children
- Foregoing the added benefit of the younger and older players interacting with each other. The older players were role models to the younger players and could provide additional help and support.



# WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES AND RESULTS

By Ian Rogers, Justin Tan and Rishi Sardana

Rarely has a country dominated the World Youth Championships as convincingly as India did in Greece, winning five gold medals, three silver and three bronze. No other country won more than one gold medal and chess powerhouses Russia, China and the USA went home without a single gold between them.

Even more remarkably, the five Indian winners were from a single chess school in Anand's home city of Chennai.

Chess Gurukul is run by GM RB Ramesh – whom many may remember from his role as a commentator as the 2013 World Championship match in Chennai – and his wife WGM Aarthie Ramaswamy. (A gurukul is a traditional Indian educational establishment, a contraction from the sanskrit terms guru (Master) and kula (extended family))

Until now the star student of Chess Gurukul has been Aravindh Chithambaram who became a Grandmaster at 15 but did not play in Greece because he is concentrating on stronger tournaments.

Chennai's guru Ramesh explains how Chess Gurukul operates;

"At Chess Gurukul we have divided the students into five groups based on FIDE ratings: 1. Absolute beginners, 2. Below 1200, 3. 1200-1600, 4. 1600-2000, 5. 2000 and above.

"We have coaches for the first 3 groups whose aim will be to push the kids to above 1600 level. I work with the fourth and fifth groups myself.

"I teach 3 days a week for 3 hours each in the evenings after school hours (5 to 8pm). Other groups have their

own class timings with their coaches.

"During the day time I usually work one on one with the really talented ones. Before major events we have small group camps for 4 to 6 hours in a day.

"Most of the kids go to regular schools and attend classes except just before major events. Vaishali [U/14 Girls winner] and Praggnanandhaa [U/10 Open winner] don't go to school on a daily basis but study from home. However they must still attend special classes and sit examinations.

"All five gold medal winners are from our academy in Chennai and work with me in Chess Gurukul. Rakshitta [U/10 Girls winner] is from Bangalore but recently moved to Chennai to train with Chess Gurukul. All five are very hard-working and extremely talented."

Ramesh was unaware of the Norges Toppidrettsgymnas where Simen Agdestein has been teaching chess in a not dissimilar fashion. However Ramesh and Ramaswamy's Chess Gurukul is probably unique in that it takes in absolute beginners, as well as young players who have already shown some talent and, apparently, turns some of them into World Youth Champions.

## **Open U/18 (11 rounds, 116 players)**

**1.** Mosadeghpour(IRI) 9.5;

**=2.** Alekseenko(RUS), Yuffa(RUS) 8.5;

**=4.** Sardana(AUS), Tan(Vic), Marek(CZE) 8...

**=93.** Ce.Koh(NSW) 4.



# Rishi Sardana

IM Rishi Sardana produced one of the best efforts ever by an Australian at the World Youth, placing =4th and finishing just ahead of his compatriot Justin Tan on tie-break by virtue of winning their individual encounter. We spoke to Rishi after his phenomenal result.

INTERVIEW BY FEDJA ZULFIC AND MOULTHUN LY

**R**ishi, congratulations on a brilliant performance in Porto Carras! Can you tell us about how your tournament went and how that compared with your expectations coming in?

Thank you so much! First of all I'd like to express my immense gratitude towards the AusJCL for selecting me to represent Australia in this prestigious event. Needless to say that I'm very happy with the way the tournament went and I consider this to be one of my best, most stable performances in recent times. My expectations were not particularly high at the start of the tournament, as for the past few months I had been concentrating on schoolwork and wasn't able to give much time to chess. Moreover I had been having a pretty inconsistent year with my rating going back and forth between early 2400's and 2380's. So keeping all this in mind, finishing with a medal didn't seem too realistic but things worked out surprisingly well!

**We've been aware of you since you played in the Doeberl Cup and Sydney International Open in 2013, but you've probably slipped under the radar of most in the Australian chess community. Can you tell us a bit about yourself, where you live now, and your connection to Australia?**

I was actually born in Australia and did my first few years of schooling over there until Grade 3. Then I migrated to India with my parents due to some work commitments of theirs, and have been living there ever since. Unsurprisingly, that's actually where I picked up chess. Yes, it's true that I haven't exactly been a prominent presence in Australian chess but I definitely intend to change that in the future!

**Why did you choose to start playing for Australia?**

Well It just seemed like the right thing to do since Australia is , after all , my country of birth. Moreover there were some



unfavourable government policies towards Non-resident Indians which barred me from certain tournaments, causing an unnecessary hindrance. It was actually a combination of several reasons but mainly the former that prompted me to change.

‘My aim is to simply enhance my strength and the rest will follow’

new level of inspiration. As far as coaching is concerned, there are no organised programmes in place as such, but India is scattered with coaches of different rating barriers, so the incredible abundance of training facilities is naturally bound to produce results.

**India absolutely dominated the medal tally at the World Youth this year. Can you tell us about your experience growing up as part of such a talented generation, and the programs in place that are creating so many top players?**

Growing up in the vicinity of so many talented and ambitious players had a really big influence on me. By now it's a well-established fact that India is a conveyor belt for Medal Winners and title holders, and as you can imagine the heat of the competition and the quality of play over there provides a whole

**What are your chess (and other) ambitions? Would you consider moving back to Australia given the relatively weak chess scene in the country?**

My aim is to simply enhance my strength and the results will follow. Getting the GM title as soon as possible would be great. As far as other ambitions are concerned, in the short run I'd like to pursue an honours degree in Economics at my first choice university. I would definitely not rule out moving back to Australia as it's a beautiful place to live and frankly the Aussie chess scene doesn't



**Left:**

Both Justin (2nd from left) and Rishi (far right) finished 4th and 5th giving Australia one of their best ever tournament results.



**Rishi on the left playing in the Sant Marti Open**

Photo: Pau Pascual Duran for ChessBase

seem bad at all. Granted the number of GM tournaments is not as much as Asia or Europe, but I can always travel for that and even locally there are plenty of interesting events and lots of scope to improve.

**The AJCL has a policy to always give preference to Australian resident juniors when allocating free accommodation at events like the World Youth. Do you feel discriminated against or do you think that this is fair enough?**

I don't consider it to be a major issue and I fully respect the policies of the federation provided they're applied consistently and transparently.

**You applied to be part of the team for the 2014 Australian Olympiad team but weren't**

**selected. Have you thought about applying again next year? Will this be a future goal for you?**

Definitely! It would be an absolute privilege for me to be given an opportunity to represent Australia in such a prestigious event, and try my best to score a few valuable points, so I think it's fair to say that this is one of my goals for the future. I'll probably be applying next year provided University doesn't get in the way. Attain the FIDE Senior Trainer title (which is even more exclusive than the Grandmaster title), and it would be nice to write a very high-quality book at some stage.

**Thanks for talking to us and good luck for your next tournaments!**

**Tan, Justin** 2445

**Sardana, Rishi** 2385

World Youth U-18 2015

Game Annotated  
by IM Rishi Sardana

**1.e4** This game was probably one of my most crucial victories in the entire tournament. Before this game, both me and my exceptionally talented compatriot had been having a rather shaky tournament, with me messing up winning advantages and conceding draws, (not to mention even managing to lose one!) and Justin going through a similar situation, so naturally both of us were eager to start getting some good results.

Little did we know that we would get the most unfortunate pairing imaginable -- each other! The game was a fascinating one, well fought albeit with plenty of mistakes, but it's the last mistake that matters as they say!

**1...c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3** Now from what I had seen of Justin, it was really difficult to surprise him in the opening and he has an impeccable knowledge of the first phase of the game. So deciding what to play was not so easy. I thought about several things; e4-e5, the Taimanov, the Caro-Kann, etc. But after skimming through his games and pondering for a while, I decided to stick to what I knew best-- the Najdorf.

**5...a6 6.h3**



**e5 7.♘de2 h5 8.g3 b5 9.♘d5 ♘bd7**

Just mainstream theory



**10.♘ec3 ♗b8!?** An idea I had seen just before leaving for the round. This idea was given in brief by Evgeny Postny in a survey for ChessBase Magazine. It was rather careless

of me not to check it in detail as it proved to be my undoing (almost!).

**10...♘xd5 11.♘xd5 ♘b6 12.♙g5!** This clever intermizzo creates a huge hole in the Black dark squares, **12...f6 13.♙e3 +=**

**10...♙b7** is the main move **11.♙g5 ♗c8 12.♙g2 ♙e7 13.♘xe7 ♗xe7 14.h4** It looks much easier to play White, **11.♙g5** Funnily enough, Postny doesn't even mention this logical move.

**11.a3** is all he considers, with the idea of preventing ...b4 **11...♘xd5 12.♘xd5 ♘b6** Now White doesn't have the resource **♙c1-g5**, as the Knight is protected by the rook as well.

**11...♙b7?!**

**11...b4** is possible and probably best, but I felt a little uneasy about the ensuing positions.

**12.♙xf6 gxf6!**

**12...♘xf6 13.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14.♘d5 ♗d8 15.♙c4** followed by **♗f3** and 0-0-0, and Black looks very uncomfortable.

**13.♘b1 f5!? 14.exf5 ♘f6∞** Black's king



is a little too airy for my liking, but he has some dynamic factors like the bishop pair that work in his favour and it may be enough to hold the balance.

**12. ♖g2 ♘e7 13. ♘xe7 ♙xe7** Usually Black gets this sort of position with the rook on a8 instead of b8, but with black to move! Now clearly he wouldnt play ... ♖b8 in a situation like that, and would prefer to bring it directly to c8. So it's quite apparent that the whole idea has been refuted and I've lost a crucial tempo.



**14. ♘d5 ♙xd5 15. exd5** Setting a devilishly tricky trap, which is only possible due to the waste of tempo in the opening.

### 15...O-O?

**15... ♙d8** The fact that this unfortunate retreat is a necessity in this position just illustrates how badly Black is doing.



**16. ♙xh5! +/-** Whoops! Didnt see that coming! After getting pushed around in the opening, now was probably a good time to have a long think and take things into perspective. After trying to come up with more peaceful solutions to the problem in vain, I realised that since I've not much to lose, the strategy is simple-- Hack Hack Hack!! **16...e4** Forcing him to castle queenside so that i can pile up on his king.

### 17.O-O-O

17.O-O? ♙e5=

**17... ♖fc8 18. ♙h4?!** I thought this move was a little careless from a practical standpoint. Its clear that I'm going to invite all my pieces to the party on the queenside and White should naturally bring in some reinforcements to control the crowd, so stuffing the queen in this murky corner seems paradoxical. Instead, the calm **18. ♖b1** or **♙e2** first.

18... ♖c4

18... ♘b6 **19. ♙h4! +/-** ( **19. ♙e2 +/-** )

**18. ♙e2 ♘b6** is an idea that I had considered during the game, with moves like ... ♘c4 and ... ♙e5 in the air. While White can avoid all this with **18. ♖b1**, it doesn't work here either. **18... ♖c4 19. ♖he1 ♘c4 20. ♙xe4** with a huge advantage.

**18... ♖c4 19. ♖he1 ♖bc8 20. ♖b1** This looks dodgy. **20.Re2!?** Simple but effective, avoiding any monkey business by Black.

20...e3?

**20... ♙d8 21. ♙f4** Bringing her majesty back to save the day.

**21. ♖d4!**

**20...e3 21. ♖xe3 ♙d8 22.g4 ♖xc2** Round about here I was starting to switch from survival mode to something a little more ambitious than that. White's advantage has more or less disappeared, and now he has to be super careful to hold the balance.

Black's plan is simple-- Swing the queen to the queenside with ♙a5-b4 coupled with a knight sortee to a4 via b6 or even c5. White faces the practically difficult task of dealing with these threats.



**23.♔e4??** Loses on the spot. Instead White should hold things together with the concrete 23.♖g3 ♕a5 24.♞a3! ♖b6 25.♞b3 This computer suggestion may seem kind of hard to understand, but actually the idea is simple- To play Rc1 and exchange the beast on c2. Unfortunately this isn't possible with the rook on a3, so White simply relocates it. Just textbook prophylaxis!

25.♞c1?? ♞xc1+ 26.♔xc1 b4-+ and ...♞c5

25.♞e3 is a possibility

**23...♞xe4?** Double Blunder!!

23...♞c7! -+ This trivial move wins on the spot, threatening immediate mate on c1 and winning some heavy material.

**24.♞xe4**

24.♔xd8 of course fails to the neat 24...♞d2+ 25.♞xd2

25.♔a1 ♞c1+ 26.♞xc1 ♞xc1#

25...♞c1#

**24...♞c7 25.♞de1??**



25.♞ee1 is whites only option, although Black is clearly dominating.

**25...♞e5 -+** Luckily this time I didn't mess up 26.♞g3 f6 27.♞xe5 dxe5 28.♞b3 ♖f7 29.♔e3 ♞2c4 30.♞d1 ♞d8 31.♞d3 ♞d6 32.f4!? A very clever and successful! attempt to complicate things by Justin.

**32...exf4** Played after a second's thought, courtesy the restlessness caused by time trouble. Not a bad move, Practically anything wins here but the correct follow-up , which I failed to spot, is important.

32...e4 -+

**33.b3 ♞c8?** Making my winning task much more difficult seems to be my area of specialisation! Now the d5

pawn is a real source of annoyance, although of course Black should objectively still win.

33...♞b7! -+ maintains Black's grip on the position. 34.♔a1 ♞xd5! 35.♞xd5+ ♞xd5 36.♞xd5 fxe3 37.♞d1 e2 38.♞e1 ♞c2 -+

**34.♔xf4 ♞d7 35.♔g3 ♞e8 36.♞f5 ♞dd8 37.♞d3 ♞d7 38.♞f3 ♞f7 39.h4?** This was probably a crucial mistake, loosening the g4 pawn and giving me a fresh target. The key for White is to keep the pawn structure compact, but once again I suspect eventually Black should find a way through.

39.d6

**39...♞g6 40.d6 ♞d7 41.♞d5+ ♔h7 42.♞f3 ♞e4 43.g5 ♞d4 44.♔c2 fxg5 45.hxg5 ♔g8** Setting a little trap of my own after falling into pretty much all of my opponents traps! :D



**46.♞a8+ ♞d8! 47.♞xd8+ ♔h7**



Games Annotated  
by IM Justin Tan

48.♔b2 ♚xd3 -+

The rest should be easy and I'm pleased to say that I managed to hold back my special talent for messing up winning positions for the remainder of the game.

49.♚e8 ♚d2+ 50.♔b1 ♚d1+ 51.♔b2 ♚d2+ 52.♔b1 ♚xg5 53.♚e2 ♚d2 54.♚f3 ♚g6+ 55.♔a1 ♚f6+ 56.♚xf6 gxf6 57.♔b1 ♔g6 58.♔c1 ♚d5 59.♔b2 ♔f5 60.♔c3 ♔e4 61.♔b4 f5 62.♔a5 f4 63.♔xf4 ♔xf4 64.♔xa6 b4 65.♔b6 ♔e5

And so Black has the last laugh in this tense and exciting game. Kudos to Justin for being such a fighter, both in the game and for the remainder of the tournament where he bulldozed through the rest of the field to come =4th with me.

0 - 1

Tan, Justin 2445

Swotkowski, J 2328

[Annotations by Justin Tan]

World Youth U-18 2015

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♚c7 6.♔e3 a6

Previously my opponent has played exclusively 6...♘f6

7.♚d2 Against van Kampen, I played

7.g3. I've also played 7.♚f3!?

7...♘f6 8.O-O-O ♔e7 The trendy line these days.



9.f3 b5 10.♔b1 h5 ( 10...Ne5 11.g4 b4 12.♘a4 1-0 Caruana,F (2791) - Svidler,P (2753) / Stavanger NOR 2014/The Week in Chess 1022 (39)

11.♔d3 11.♘xc6 dxc6 12.♔d3 += is generally a favourable pawn structure for white.

11...♔b7 12.♚he1?

12.♘xc6 ♔xc6 13.♚he1 +=

12...♘e5 =

13.♚f2 ♘c4? 13...♚c8 with counterplay. Black is very well

coordinated.

14.♔xc4 ♚xc4 was necessary though it would be considered a concession.

14...bxc4 15.♘de2 += 15.♘b3

15.e5 ♘d5 16.♘xd5 ♔xd5 17.b3 +/-

15...a5? 15...b4 16.♘a4 +=

16.♚d4 16.♔c5! b4

16...a4 17.♔xe7 ♔xe7 18.♘c5 b4 19.e5 ♘d5 20.♘3e4 +=

17.♘a4 ♚b5 18.♔xe7 ♔xe7 19.♘d4 ! +=

16...♚c6



16...♚c8 17.♘xb5 a4 18.♘d2 +/- White



## WORLD YOUTH U-18

needs to consolidate but eventually the extra pawn will show. To see 'how not to consolidate' see Tan-Sardana :P

**17.e5** ♖d5 **18.** ♗xd5 exd5 **19.** ♖d3 In time to vacate the d4-square for the knight.

**19...** ♖f8 **20.** ♗d4 ♖a6 **21.** ♗f5 ♖e6 **22.** ♗xe7 ♖xe7 **23.** ♙c5+ ♖d8 With opposite-coloured bishops in the middlegame and holes everywhere, Black's position is not really salvageable.

**24.f4** ♖a6 **25.f5** ♖e8 **26.** ♙d6 ♖h6 **27.** ♖g3

White should not be too hasty! **27.** ♖c5?? ♖hxd6 -+

**27...** ♖h8 It was hard to refrain from the following manoeuvre: **28.** ♖c5 ♙c6 **29.** ♙f8 ♖h7 **30.** e6 fxe6 **31.** fxe6 g5 **32.** e7+ ♖e8 **33.** ♖d6

I was unhappy to see him extend his hand here because I wanted to play **33.** ♖d6 ♖a8 **34.** ♖f3 ♖g8 **35.** ♙g7 !

**1 - 0**

**Tan, Justin** 2445

**Alekseenko, Kirill** 2558

[Annotations by Justin Tan]

World Youth U-18 2015

Three rounds before this round, I had lost to fellow compatriot Rishi Sardana in a critical game. This meant that I absolutely had to win the remaining games to obtain a podium standing. On the other hand, after one loss, my opponent (whom I've played twice before) had, in true style, conceded just half a point out of 6 games, to reach outright second in the standings. Hence, he was still in the running for first place.

**1.e4 c5 2.c3!** The move I have dubbed "Smerdon-inspired opening preparation".



**2.** ♗f3 d6 **3.** d4 cxd4 **4.** ♗xd4 ♗f6 **5.** ♗c3 ♗c6 **6.** ♙g5 e6 **7.** ♖d2 a6 **8.** O-O-O ♙d7 **9.** f3 featured in both of our previous encounters (Wch U14 Caldas Novas 2011, Youth Olympiad U16 Chongqing 2013)

In World Championships U14, I managed to beat Kirill. After this, he produced a most incredible display: winning every game thereafter to

finish on 8/9 and become world champion. As I was aware of his tremendous fighting spirit, I assumed he was out to kill me. Thus, my game plan was to play something seemingly very dull and watch him go crazy:D in boxing, this is known as the 'rope-a-dope' technique ( see Ali-Foreman 1974! )

**2...d6!?** Kirill attempts to make the position as lively as possible, an early sign that my plan would work.

**2...** ♗f6 **3.** e5 ♗d5 **4.** ♗f3

**2...** d5 **3.** exd5 ♖xd5 **4.** d4 ♗f6 **5.** ♗f3

**3.** d4 ♗f6 **4.** ♙d3 ♗c6 **5.** ♗f3 g6 **6.** d5 ♗b8 **7.** h3 ♙g7 **8.** O-O O-O **9.** ♖e1 ♗a6 **10.** a4

**10.c4** I seriously considered transposing to a normal Benoni structure which would also be pleasant.

**10...** ♗c7 **11.** ♗a3 e6 At this point, Board 3 (next to us), was already agreed drawn, and then we witnessed Board 1 make a draw. This prompted Kirill to offer a draw here.



**A few of the juniors after their game**  
Photo: From Justin Tan - Facebook



**12.dxe6** After the draw offer, a small crowd emerged and the arbiter was standing right by the board ready to sign off the scoresheets. However, I saw no reason to accept the draw.

12.c4 += is preferred slightly by the computer. Though this would be somewhat strange in conjunction with my last couple of moves.

**12...♙xe6 13.♘g5 ♘d7?**

13...d5 14.♘xe6 fxe6 ( 14...♘xe6 15.exd5 ♙xd5 16.♙c4 += is very comfortable for White. )

15.exd5

15.♙g5 was the computer's first choice but isn't convincing to me: 15... ♙d7 16.♙d2 ♙c6

15...exd5 16.♙e2 ♙d7 17.♙f3 += the asymmetric pawn structure and open position will favour the two bishops.

**14.♙c2 ♙e7 15.f4 ♙h6**

15...♙fe8 found by Stockfish. There are many ways for White to claim his advantage. ♘xe6 will always be pleasant. 16.♙e3 ♘f6 17.♘xe6 ♙xe6 18.f5 ♙d7 19.♙f4 +/-

**16.♘f3**

16.h4! +/- really halts Black's counterplay.

**16...f5** desperation

The ugly 16...f6 +/- is probably necessary.

16...♟f6 17.f5 ♔xc1 18.♞xc1 ♔d7 19.e5 +- Black is getting squished.

**17.exf5 gxf5 18.♔b3** Of course, the most forceful is 18.♟b5! ♟xb5 19.axb5 ♟b6 and now, of course, I overlooked, or strongly underestimated 19...♞f6 20.♟g5 ♔xg5 21.fxg5 ♞f7 22.♔f4 +- Black is being constricted on all sides of the board.

20.♟h4! We can learn a lot from modern day computers! Stockfish uses tactics to accommodate for positional advantages.

20...♞d7 ( 20...♞xh4 21.♞xe6 ♔xf4 22.♔xf4 ♞xf4 23.♞h5 +- Black's position is critical.

21.g4! fxg4 22.f5 ♔xc1 23.fxe6 ♞e7 24.♞xg4+ ♟h8

24...♔g5 25.♟f5 +-

25.♞axc1 ♞g8 26.♔g6 hxg6 27.♟h2 +- the e6-pawn renders the Black queen useless. Black's other pieces are also rather immobile.

**18...♔xb3?** The position was dire anyway.



18...♞f6 19.♟g5 ♔xg5 20.fxg5 ♞g6 21.♟c4 d5 22.♟e5 ♟xe5 23.♞xe5 =+

**19.♞xb3+ ♞f7 20.♞xb7 ♞fc8 21.♞c6 ♟e8 22.♞a6 c4 23.♔e3 ♞ab8**

23...♟c5 both captures (♔c5 or Qc4) here are fine but for simplicity's sake, I prefer 24.♞xc4 ( 24.♔xc5 ♞xc5 25.♟d4 is similar to the game. ) 24...♞xc4 25.♟xc4 ♟d3 26.♞ed1 ♟xf4 27.♔xf4 ♔xf4 28.♞d4 +-

**24.♟b5 ♟c5 25.♔xc5 ♞xc5 26.♟fd4 ♔xf4 27.♟e6 ♔g3 28.♟xc5 ♔xe1 29.♞xe1 dxc5 30.♞c6 ♟f6 31.♞xc5** the human continuation.

31.♟d6 ♞d5 32.♞c7 ♞f8 33.♞e7 I didn't see White's threat of ♞g7+ ♟h8 ♞g5!

33...♟h5 34.♞xh7 ♞d2 35.♟xc4 ♞g5 36.h4! is a typical computer move.

( 36.♞e7 ♞c1+ ) 36...♞xh4 ( 36...♞g6 37.♞e7 +- ) 37.♞e7 ♞xe7 37...♞g4

38.♟e5 ♞d1+ 39.♟h2 +- ) 38.♞xe7 +- )

**31...♟e4 32.♞e5 ♞f8 33.♟h2**

( 33.♟d4 ♞xb2 34.♟e6 ♞h6 35.♞xf5 +- )

**33...♞b6 34.♞f1 ♞f6**

34...♞b8 35.♞xf5 ♞xe5+ 36.♞xe5 +-

**35.♞d1** since now, ♞b8 isn't possible

**35...♟g5 36.♞d7 ♟e6 37.♞d6 ♞h6 38.♟d4 ♟xd4 39.♞xf6**

39.♞xf6 ♟f3+ 40.gxf3 ♞d2+ 41.♟g3 +-

**1-0**

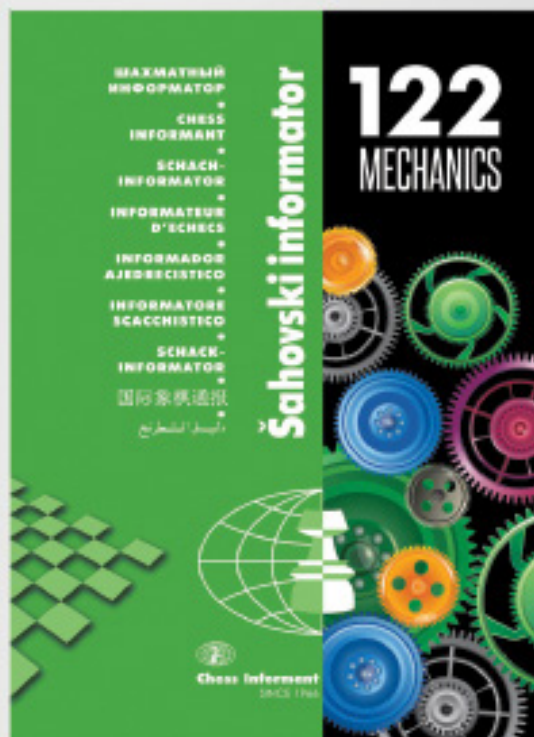


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# The Skewer

Solutions page 63

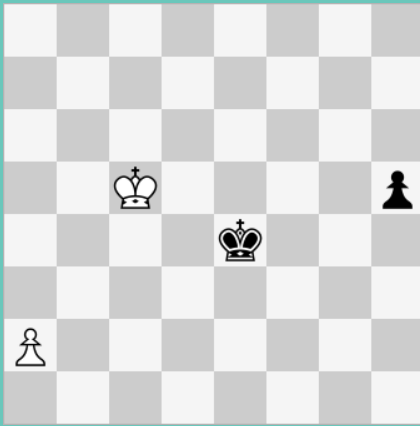
The skewer is a common chess tactic which can be performed by the bishop, rook or queen. In most cases attacking a more valuable piece in front, in order to capture the piece behind it. There are situations whereby you will also need to force the alignment of pieces, sometimes through forceful moves or sacrifices.

In the following example with white to move, he can play the queen skewer ♔h4+ after which Black will have to surrender the rook on d8. You should always keep an eye out for lining up pieces in such a way as it is useful to tactical possibilities.

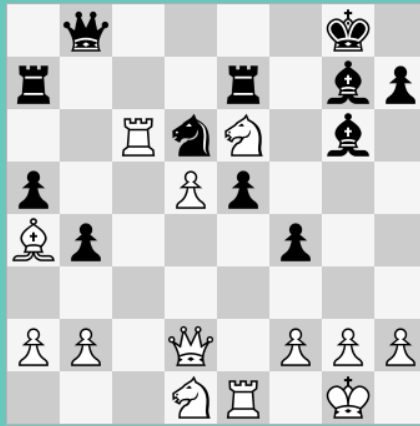


To solve the puzzles on the next page, you'll need to use a skewer to win material. Remember - a bishop is worth 3 points, rook (5 points) and queen (9 points). We usually want to skewer the more valuable piece in the middle.

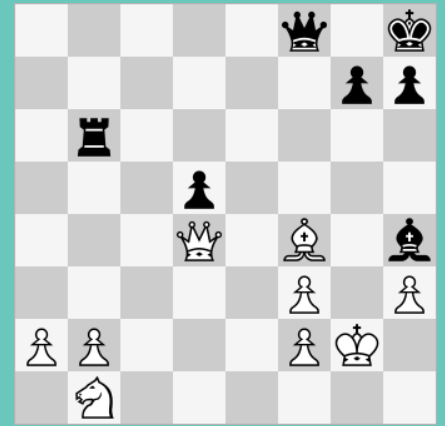
The puzzles are arranged to be in levels of mixed difficulty. Some are quite tricky and involve the use of other tactics also. Happy solving!



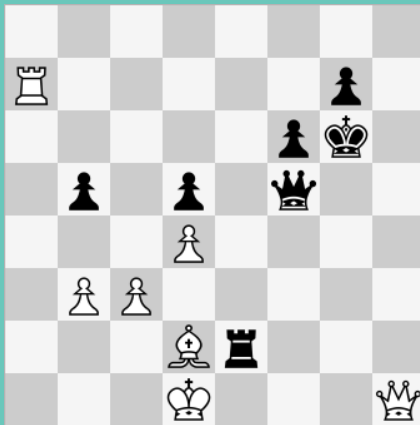
1. White to move



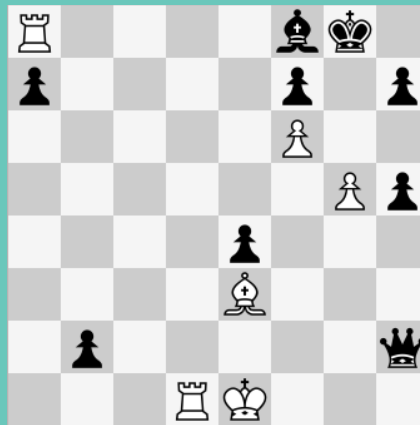
2. Black to move



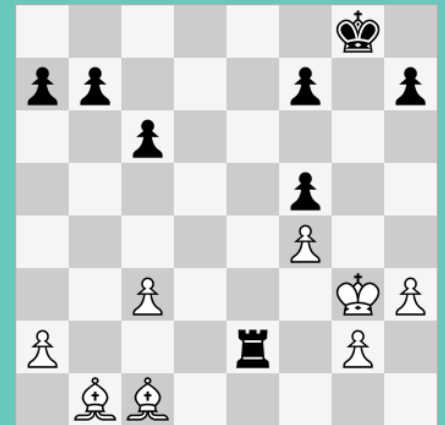
3. Black to move



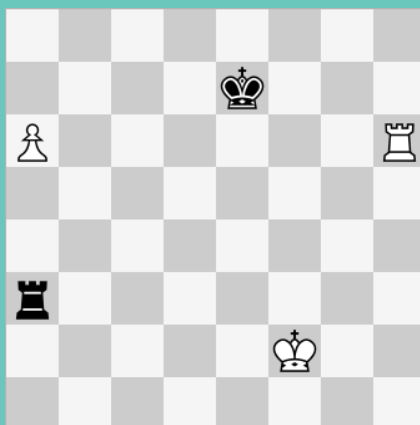
4. Black to move



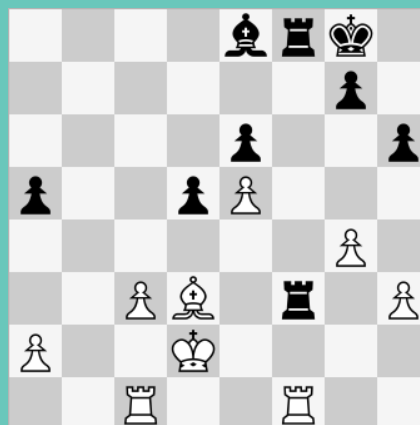
5. Black to move



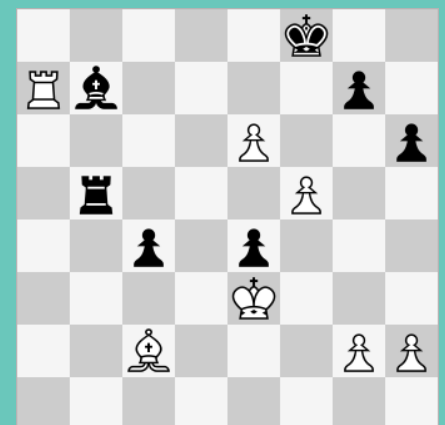
6. Black to move



7. White to move



8. Black to move



9. White to move



# Neutralising 1.e4 with the Petroff - Part 2

By IM Max Illingworth

## Modern Attack with dxe5

### 1.e4 e5 2.d3 f6

In this second part of my article on the Petroff I will cover White's alternatives to the old main line 3.dxe5 d6 4.f3 fxe4 5.d4, with a particular focus on the trendy Nimzowitsch Attack 5.d3.

**3.d4** This variation has the rather ironic name of the 'Modern Attack' (as it has not been so trendy of late)



### 3...dxe4 4.d3

### 4.dxe5 d5

4...d5 looks like a fun line, but it's White who has all the fun after 5.dxc4 dxf2 6.dxf7+ gxf7 7.f3 d5+ 8.fxc5 dxe1 9.d3 and White has a draw at worst, while Black has to find several accurate moves before he can claim equality.

5.d3 is quite an interesting alternative and can be recommended to those who prefer original, non-theoretical positions, however, Black is fine after 5...d5

5...f5!? is an interesting alternative for the more creative types.

6.d3 e6 7.d4 dxd4 8.dxd4 e7 9.d3 O-O 10.c3 c5 11.f3 d6 12.h3 f6 13.exf6 gxf6 14.O-O f5 = 1/2 - 1/2 (16) Gavrilakis, N (2475) - Hatzl, J (2496) ICCF email 2009

### 4...d5

4...d6?! is an interesting idea of Murey, unfortunately it's not objectively as good because of 5.dxe4 d5 6.dg5! f6 7.d3 e4 8.O-O += and White obtains a strong central initiative.

**5.dxe5!?** was briefly popular about 6-10 years ago, before Black came upon 5...dxe5 will be seen in the next game.

**5...dxe7 6.O-O d5!** getting out of the way of c4



### 7...e2

7.d3 dxd3 8.f3xd3 c6 9.d4 O-O 10.f4 f5! is well known to be fine for Black, for example 11.d3 ( 11.f3 is probably better, but I like Black's position after 11...d6 = intending ...c5-e4. )

11...d6 12.Be3 d7 13.d2 b6 14.d4 e6 15.f3 d2 fxe8 16.c3 c5 17.f3 d8 18.f1 e6 += and Black had total positional domination in 0-1 (62) Navara, D (2672) - Kramnik, V (2788) Prague 2008

**7...O-O 8.d3 e3 c6** This is fine for Black, all you really need to know is the following game: 8...d6 9.d3 Be6 was played by Gelfand on several occasions, but he didn't manage to equalise after 10.d5! d7

10...a6 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.d4 d7 13.f3 d2 f6 14.f4 a5 15.f1 ae1 fxe5 16.fxe5 += is much easier for White to play as Black can't get in his desired ...c5 break.

11.dxd5 dxe5 12.dxe7+ fxe7 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.d4 f8 15.fxe5

♖d5 16.♞e4 ♜xb5 17.b3 += and the misplaced b5-rook gave White a persistent initiative in ½-½ (36) Karjakin,S (2717)-Gelfand,B (2755) Jermuk 2009. The position reminds me somewhat of Karjakin's win over Onischuk at this year's World Cup.

9.c4 dxc4 10.♙xc4 ♞xd1 11.♞xd1 ♜bd7 12.b4 ♜e6 13.a3 ♜b6 14.♙a2 ♜c7 15.♜c3 ♙e6 16.♙c5 ♙xc5 17.bxc5 ♜bd5 18.♜xd5 ♙xd5 19.♙xd5 ♜xd5 20.♞d3 ♞fe8 21.g3 = ½-½ (21) Movsesian,S (2696) - Fridman,D (2602) Germany 2013.



If it were up to me though, I'd keep the queens on and preserve the play in the position.

### Modern Attack Main Line

1.e4 e5 2.♜f3 ♜f6 3.d4 ♜xe4 4.♙d3 d5 5.♜xe5 ♜d7 6.♜xd7



I used to think White could effectively force a draw here with 6.♜xf7 ♞xf7 7.♞h5+ ♞e7 8.♞e2, but Black has a reasonable deviation in 8...♜f6 9.f3 ♙e6 10.fxe4 dxe4 11.♙xe4 ♞xd4 12.♜c3 ♜xe4 13.♜xe4 ♞c4! = which despite its awfully risky appearance proves fine for Black.

6.♜c3 ♜xe5 7.dxe5 ♜xc3 8.bxc3 is a somewhat tricky line as the doubled c-pawns help to hold back Black's queenside pawns, however as long as he knows to play 8...♙c5! he is fine.

9.O-O or 9.♞h5 g6!? 10.♞h6 ♙f8 11.♞e3 ♙g7 12.O-O O-O 13.f4 ♞e8= and White is unable to advance his majority due to the pressure on e5.

9...O-O 10.♞f3!? I think this is White's best try, intending ♞g3 and typical kingside attacking ideas from there.

10.♞h5 g6 11.♞h6 ♞e7 12.♙f4 ♞e8! = is an important improvement indicated by Nedev.

10...f6! is what I would do to try and interfere with this plan, e.g. 11.♙e3! ♙xe3 12.♞xe3 ♙e6 13.♞fe1 c6 = when Black's position has no

weaknesses, so he shouldn't be any worse.

6...♙xd7 7.O-O ♙d6 8.♞h5!? I think this line offers the best chances for White to 'get a game'.



8.♜c3 ♜xc3 9.bxc3 O-O 10.♞h5 f5 is something of a dead end for White, e.g. 11.♞e1 or 11.♙g5 ♞e8 12.♞f3 ♞f7 13.♙f4 ♞ae8 14.♙xd6 cxd6 =

11...g6!?

The more common 11...c6 12.♙g5 ♞c7 is also fine, but I want to offer something more original and just as good.

12.♞f3 c6 13.♙f4 ♞c7 14.♙xd6 ♞xd6 15.c4 Rfe8 16.c5 ♞c7 = followed by ...b6 with equality. If 17.c4 ♞a5! is a neat rejoinder.

8.c4 can lead to a long and old theoretical line starting with 8...c6, but if you're not a history buff you may want to reduce your workload with 8...O-O!? 9.cxd5 f5, which resembles a very good Elephant Gambit for Black and has been played by Gelfand.

## NEUTRALISING E4 WITH THE PETROFF - P2

After 10.♘c3 ♗f6! 11.♙e3 or 11.♗f3 ♘g5 12.♗h5 ♘f7 = which has proved fine for Black in various engine games.

11...♖ae8 12.♘xe4 fxe4 13.♙e2 ♗f7 14.Rc1 b5 and Black regains his pawn with an equal game, unless White mixes it up with 15.♖c5!? , but Black can just ignore the sacrifice and maintain the balance with 15...a6!? =

**8...♗f6** This main line leads to quite forcing play, but it's not the only option.



8...O-O!? 9.♗xd5 ♙c6 10.♗h5 g6 is an interesting pawn sacrifice, relying on the awkward position of White's queen. After 11.♗h3 ♘g5 12.♙xg5 ( 12.♗h6 Ne6 13.c3 Qf6 and ...♘f4 only makes White give up the dark-squared bishop under worse circumstances. )

12...♗xg5 13.♘c3 ♖ae8 14.♖ae1 ♗f4 = and Black had sufficient compensation in the style of the Marshall Gambit in a few correspondence games, the most

recent being ½-½ (19) Novikovas,V (2543) - Novak,J (2513) ICCF email 2011

8...♘f6 9.♖e1+ ♗f8 feels a bit risky to me, but it holds up to closer scrutiny: 10.♗e2 ♘g4 ( 10...c6 11.h3! ♗b6 12.♙e3! ♗xb2 13.♘d2 ♗b6 14.c4 with initiative would favour White. )

11.h3 ♗h4 12.♗f3 ♘f6 13.♘c3 h5! This is a new move from a recent game and changes the assessment of the whole line. 14.♙f5 c6 15.♙xd7 ♘xd7 16.♗f5 ♗d8 17.♙g5 g6 18.♙xd8 gxf5 19.♙h4 ♗g7 20.♙e7 1/2-1/2 (38) Guseinov,G (2614) - Kuzubov,Y (2667) Dubai 2015 20...♙c7 = and Black is fine in this endgame as White can't effectively attack the doubled f-pawns.

**9.♘c3 ♗xd4 10.♙e3 ♗e5 11.♗xe5+ ♙xe5 12.♘xd5 ♘f6 13.♖ae1 ♘xd5 14.♙d4 O-O-O 15.♙xe5**



Normally this endgame would be slightly better for White because of

the bishop pair, but it is Black to move and with **15...♘b4!** he equalises the position, as demonstrated in the **16.♙c4 ♘xc2 17.♖e2 f6 18.♙c3 ♙f5 19.♖e7 ♖d7 20.♖xd7 ♗xd7 21.g4 ♙g6** = of ½-½ (45) Efimenko,Z (2661) - Giri,A (2749) Rhodes 2013

### 3.Nxe5 Sidelines

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♘xe5 d6 4.♘f3** The Cochrane Gambit with 4.♘xf7? ♗xf7 is totally unsound and Black only needs to know that we play ...d5 at a good moment to reclaim the initiative: 5.d4

5.♙c4+ d5! 6.exd5 ♙d6 7.O-O ♖f8 8.d4 ♗g8 -/+ and Black has consolidated his position, keeping a modest material advantage.

5...c5! 6.dxc5 Once again we meet 6.♙c4+ with 6...d5! 7.exd5 b5 8.♙xb5 ♗xd5 -/+

6...d5! 7.e5 this advance is no longer so pestilent when the d-pawn was decoyed away 7...♘g4 8.♙c4 ♙xc5 9.♗xd5+ ♗xd5 10.♙xd5+ ♙e6! 11.♙xb7 ♙xf2+ 12.♗e2 ♘d7 13.♙xa8 ♙c4+ 14.♗d1 ♖xa8 15.h3 ♘gxe5 -/+ and as often happens in gambit openings, Black returned the material to claim a huge initiative against White's exposed king, 0-1 (39) Spitz,P (2498) - Copar,A (2502) ICCF



email 2011

4.♘c4 is tried by some creative maverick every now and then, but Black is fine after 4...♗xe4 5.Nc3

or 5.♖e2 ♖e7 6.♗e3 ♕e6 !?

5...♗xc3 6.bxc3 g6 7.d4 ♕g7 8.♕d3 O-O 9.O-O d5!? 10.♗e3 c6 =

**4...♗xe4 5.♖e2** This is the most interesting of the sidelines, in that White effectively gains a couple of extra tempi in a quiet position. This should appeal to those that like to press without any risk.



5.d4 was covered in Part I.

5.d3 ♗f6 6.d4 d5 transposes to a harmless line of the Exchange French.

5.♕d3 was briefly popular in the late 90s, but Black equalises quite easily with 5...♗f6 6.O-O Be7 7.h3 O-O 8.c3 c5 9.Bc2 ♗c6 10.d4 ♕e6 11.♖e1 h6 12.♕e3 ♖e8 13.♗bd2 ♕f8 14.♗e4

♗d5 = 0-1 (40) Morozovich,A (2749) - Topalov,V (2711) Dortmund 2001

5.c4 ♗c6 6.♗c3 ♗xc3 7.dxc3 ♕f5 = is also fine for Black, as I wrote in an old game annotation in 2009.

5.♗c3 will be seen in the subsequent games.

5...♖e7 6.d3 ♗f6 7.♗c3 ( 7.♕g5 ♖xe2+ 8.♕xe2 ♕e7 9.♗c3 c6 10.O-O ♗a6 has long been known to be equal, although after 11.♖he1 I think it is quite interesting to try 11...d5 !? instead of the usual 11...♗c7. )

**7...♖xe2+ 8.♕xe2 g6!?**



In general it makes sense to play asymmetrically when your opponent is up more than one tempo, using the 'extra information' accordingly.

8...♕e7 9.O-O O-O 10.h3 a6 11.♖e1 ♗c6 12.a3 ♖e8 13.♕e3 ♕d7 14.d4 ♕f8 15.♕g5 ♗e4 16.♗xe4 ♖xe4 17.♕d3 ♖xe1+ 18.♖xe1 h6 19.♕d2

+/- was symbolically better for White because of his extra space in 1-0 (69) Ganguly,S (2603) - Wang,H (2713) Pattaya 2015 **9.O-O ♕g7 10.♗d4**

Also fine for Black is 10.♗b5 ♖d8 11.c4 ♖e8 12.♖e1 a6 13.♗c3 ♗c6 =

**10...♕g4 11.♕g5 ♕xe2 12.♖ae1 ♗d7 13.♖xe2 ♗a6 14.♖fe1 ♖he8 =**



and Black's position was solid as a rock in ½-½ (50) Harikrishna,P (2737) - Giri,A (2798) Skopje 2015

### World Rapid and Blitz Quiz Solutions

1. 28. ♖xh5! 1-0

2. 23... ♖xc4!! 0-1

3. 28. ♖h7+!! ♖xh7 29. ♕g6+ ♖g8 30. ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 31. ♖e8# 1-0

4. 25... ♖e4!! 0-1

5. 43... ♖e1+! 44. ♖f2 ♖e4! 45. ♖c3 ♖f4+! 46. ♖g3 ♖e1+ 0-1

6. White to move and win 37. ♖e5! exf5 38. ♖e8+ 1-0

## Nimzowitch Attack Intro

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♗xe5 d6 4.♗f3  
♗xe4 5.♘c3



This is the modern main line, primarily because it gives White very free development and straightforward middlegame plans.

5...♗xc3 The main move, but even the passive 5...♗f6!? 6.d4 ♗e7 is very hard for White to breach: 7.♗d3 d5!? White is a full tempo ahead of a normal Exchange French, but that extra move was ♗c3 which arguably misplaces the knight after Black plays ...c6.

More common is 7...O-O 8.h3 without this move, a ...♗c6/...♗g4 plan can be unpleasant 8...♗e8 9.O-O b6 10.♗e1 ♗b7 11.♗f4 a6 12.♗e4 ♗bd7 1/2-1/2 (43) Vachier Lagrave,M (2715) - Giri,A (2722) Germany 2012

13.c3 ♗xe4 14.♗xe4 ♗xe4 15.♖xe4 ♗f6 16.♖e2 ♗d5 17.♗d2 b5= and Black has no problems, as he has a strong knight and no weaknesses in his position.

8.♗g5 O-O 9.O-O

9.♖d2 h6 10.♗f4 could be met in a number of ways, but the most incredible would have to be 10...♗e4!? 11.♗xe4 dxe4 12.♗xe4 g5 13.♗e5 f6 14.♖d3 fxe5 15.♗xb7 ♗xb7 16.♖g6+ with a draw by perpetual check!

9...c6 ( 9...h6 10.♗f4 c5 11.dxc5 ♗xc5 is a more enterprising way to handle the position, though White has slightly easier play after 12.♖e1 ♗c6 13.h3 ♗e6 14.a3 += ) 10.♖e1 ♗bd7 11.♗e5 ♗e8 12.♖f3 ♗xe5 13.♖xe5 ♗e6 14.♖ae1 ♗d7 15.♗xe7 ♖xe7 16.♖e3 ♖f6= and Black faced no difficulties in 1/2-1/2 (94) Shirov,A (2696) - Heberla,B (2556) Rabat 2015

6.dxc3 ♗e7 Those looking to reach a solid position without needing to keep up with theory might investigate 6...♗c6!? 7.♗e3 ♗e6 with the intention of ...♖d7 and ...O-O-O and delaying ...Be7, as 8.♗g5 ♗f5 9.♖d5 ♖d7 10.♗c4 0-1 (65) Vachier Lagrave,M (2745) - Wang,Y (2723) Beijing 2013 10...♗d8 11.O-O-O ♗e7= followed by ...c6, ...d5 and ...f6 kicks White's pieces back, with equal chances.

7.♗d3 This is a move you might see at the club level, but it is well met by



7.Bf4 will be seen in the next game, with 7.Be3 being the subject of the last two games.

7...O-O 8.O-O Nd7 9.Be3 Nc5 10.Bxc5 dxc5 11.Re1 Bd6 12.Qe2 Qf6= 1/2-1/2 (42) Lehtinen,P (2400) - Oesterman,G (2558) Finland 2001

## 5.Nc3 7th Move Alternatives

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗f6 3.♗xe5 d6 4.♗f3  
♗xe4 5.♗c3 ♗xc3 6.dxc3 ♗e7  
7.♗f4



This is the old main line, but it has fallen almost completely out of fashion as it became established that White doesn't have to fear variations with ... $\text{d}e5$ .

7. $\text{e}3$  Now Black has the choice between castling queenside or kingside here. Normally you'd expect opposite-side castling to lead to more decisive games, but actually the statistics indicate castling on the same side as giving Black a greater percentage of wins. 7...O-O.

7... $\text{c}6$  This is the trendier option, and my main recommendation, which we'll consider in depth in the next game.

8. $\text{d}2$  b6!? 8... $\text{d}7$  9.O-O-O  $\text{e}5$  is an old main line, however it's now considered a little better for White based on some Karjakin games.

### 10. $\text{b}1!$ c6

10... $\text{e}6$  11.h4 c6 12. $\text{d}4$   $\text{d}7$  13. $\text{e}2$   $\text{e}8$  14.h5  $\text{f}8$  15. $\text{h}g1$  b5 16.g4 += gives White a faster attack on the king.

11. $\text{xe}5$  dxe5 12. $\text{d}3$   $\text{e}6$  13. $\text{e}2$   $\text{a}5$  14.c4  $\text{f}e8$  15.g4 b5 16. $\text{d}2$   $\text{b}4$  17. $\text{xb}4$   $\text{xb}4$  1/2-1/2 (37) Safarli,E (2645) - Papp,G (2551) Plovdiv 2012 18. $\text{e}4$  g6 19.cxb5  $\text{c}5$  20.bxc6  $\text{d}5$  21. $\text{e}3$   $\text{xe}3$  22.fxe3  $\text{hx}1$  23. $\text{hx}1$  += and with such a strong passed c-pawn, only White can press in this endgame. His plan will feature

$\text{e}4$ , c4 and  $\text{d}5$ .

9.O-O-O  $\text{b}7$  This fianchetto was first played over-the-board by Wang Hao.

10.h4  $\text{d}7$  11. $\text{d}4$   $\text{e}5$  12. $\text{f}5$ !?

Previously Kryvoruchko tried 12. $\text{g}5$ , but he failed to dent Black's position after 12... $\text{d}7$  13. $\text{b}5$  c6 14. $\text{e}2$  f6 15. $\text{f}4$  c5 16. $\text{f}3$   $\text{e}6$  17.b3  $\text{ad}8$  in 1/2-1/2 (37) Kryvoruchko,Y (2710) - Landa,K (2647) Germany 2015

12... $\text{f}6$  13. $\text{g}5$  h6 14.f4 White's attack proved quite strong in 1-0 (24) Kryvoruchko,Y (2697) - Romanov,E (2586) Abu Dhabi 2015, however Black should have opted for 14... $\text{g}4$  15. $\text{e}1$  Bc8 16. $\text{xf}6$   $\text{xf}6$  17. $\text{d}3$   $\text{xf}5$  18. $\text{xf}5$   $\text{e}8$  = when White doesn't get enough time to further his attack.

7...O-O Castling queenside with 7... $\text{c}6$  8. $\text{d}2$   $\text{e}6$  9.O-O-O  $\text{d}7$  10. $\text{b}1$  is the other main option, when at first it was assumed that Black should stop  $\text{b}5$  with 10...a6, but then it was demonstrated that after 10...O-O-O! 11. $\text{b}5$  a6 12. $\text{a}4$  Bf6 White has no way to make use of the pin, and Black was fine after 13. $\text{g}5$   $\text{xg}5$  14. $\text{xg}5$  b5 15. $\text{b}3$  f6 16. $\text{xe}6$   $\text{xe}6$  17. $\text{f}4$  1/2-1/2 (28) Ivanchuk,V (2781) - Kramnik,V (2788) Moscow 2008 17...Rde8 =

8. $\text{d}2$   $\text{d}7$  9.O-O-O



$\text{c}5$  The point of this manoeuvre is that White will need to play  $\text{f}4$ -e3 at some point due to the idea of ... $\text{d}e6$ , meaning White effectively loses a tempo. 10. $\text{e}3$

10. $\text{d}4$   $\text{e}8$  11.f3  $\text{e}6$  12. $\text{e}3$   $\text{g}5$  13.h4  $\text{xe}3$  14. $\text{xe}3$   $\text{xd}4$  15. $\text{xd}4$   $\text{e}7$  16. $\text{c}4$   $\text{e}3+$  17. $\text{xe}3$   $\text{xe}3$  was completely equal and agreed drawn in 1/2-1/2 (17) Polgar,J (2687) - Ivanchuk,V (2756) Hoogeveen 2009

10... $\text{e}8$  11. $\text{c}4$   $\text{e}6$  12. $\text{xe}6$   $\text{xe}6$  Kramnik and Gelfand demonstrated in several games that Black is completely safe against a potential kingside attack here.

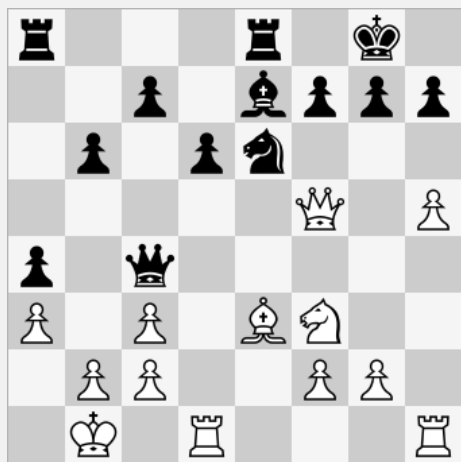




## NEUTRALISING E4 WITH THE PETROFF - P2

13.h4 ♖d7 14.♗d5 or 14.♕b1 ♗b5 15.g4 a5 16.♖hg1 a4 17.h5 h6 and White's kingside attack has reached something of a dead end, if 18.g5 ♜xg5 19.♜xg5 hxg5 20.♙xg5 a3 21.b3 ♙xg5 22.♖xg5 ♗e5 and Black defends.

14...♗c6 15.♗f5 a5 16.h5 a4 17.a3 ♗c4 18.♕b1 b6! =



and with ...♖a5 coming, White's kingside play had no chance to materialise in ½-½ (42) Volokitin,A (2678)-Gashimov,V (2664) Heraklio 2007

### Nimzowitsch Attack Main Line

1.e4 e5 2.♞f3 ♞f6 3.♞xe5 d6 4.♞f3 ♞xe4 5.♞c3 ♞xc3 6.dxc3 ♙e7 7.♙e3 ♞c6 8.♗d2 ♙e6 9.O-O-O ♗d7



This is perhaps the key position today for the entire Petroff. White has a few different options, but in all cases Black is relying on the solidity of his pawn structure.

**10.♕b1** The most flexible move, keeping all the options open. Another waiting move, 10.b3!? was tried in two recent games by Peter Leko against Li Chao, but Black managed to equalise with 10...a6! 11.h4 ( 11.h3 is most simply met by 11...O-O-O now that Bb5 is no longer on the cards. )

11...♙f6 12.♙g5 ♗e7 13.♗f4 h6 14.♙xf6 ♗xf6 15.♗xf6 gxf6= and White was unable to exploit Black's doubled pawns in ½-½ (31) Leko,P (2714) - Li,C (2748) Szeged 2015

10.♞g5 ♙xg5 11.♙xg5 f6 12.♙e3 O-O-O is completely fine for Black - his pawns on dark squares constrict White's unopposed bishop and White cannot break through.

A good illustrative example is 13.b3 Rhe8 14.f3 ♗f7 15.♙f2 ♖e7

16.h4 h5 17.♗f4 b6 18.♖d2 ♕b8 19.♙b5 ♞e5 20.♖hd1 ♙d7 21.♙f1 ♙c6 22.a4 ♞g6 23.♗d4 ♖e5 = 1/2-1/2 (46) Areshchenko,A (2709) - Maksimenko,A (2533) Poland 2013

White can also insert 10.h4 h6 before playing a waiting move, although it doesn't make a big difference to the position.

11.b3!?

11.♕b1 ♙f6 transposes to the main line.

11...♙f6

11...d5 12.♙b5 O-O 13.♞d4 a6 14.♞xe6 fxe6 15.♙d3 gives White a small edge based on his bishop pair.

12.♞d4 ♙xd4 Here in two Leko-Wang Yue games, White took back with the bishop but didn't obtain any edge. I would prefer 13.cxd4!?, but after 13...♞e7 14.♖g1 c6 15.♖e1 Nd5 Black eliminates White's bishop pair and can later castle kingside and play ...a5-a4 to loosen up White's king. So it's hard to see how White makes use of his very small initiative.

**10...♙f6** This is firmly established as the main move. Black meets flexibility with flexibility, keeping the option of castling on either flank.



10...O-O-O?! 11.♘d4! would be good for White as after 11...♘xd4 12.♙xd4 White wins a pawn.

10...a6 is also not as good, for it allows 11.h4 h6 12.♘d4! ♘xd4 13.♙xd4 O-O 14.f3! and White has some pressure on the kingside if he gets in g4, while after the preventative 14...f5 15.♙e2 ♙f6 16.f4 ♙xd4 17.♙xd4 ♙f7 18.♙f3 += White's superior piece activity gave him stable pressure in 1-0 (46) Dolgov,I (2492) - Piccoli,F (2678) ICCF email 2008

**11.h4** In general it makes sense to grab space in a static position, though other plans have been tried: 11.♙g5 ♙xg5 12.♘xg5 O-O-O 13.♘xe6 ( 13.♙b5 ♙he8 14.♘xe6 ♙xe6 is the same kind of position, where the bishop on b5 will have to reroute itself in any case. )

13...♙xe6 14.g3 might look like a very small pull for White due to having the bishop, but Giri demonstrated already how to hold such positions: 14...♙b8 15.♙g2 ♙he8 as we saw

with kingside castling earlier, Black isn't

afraid of doubled bishop's pawns 16.♙d5 ♙d7 17.♙g5 f6 18.♙h4 h6 = and there was no way through Black's fortress in ½-½ (50) Ponomarev,R (2756) - Giri,A (2737) Elancourt 2013

11.h3!? with the idea of g4/Bg2 was used successfully by Caruana and needs to be taken seriously, however it can be neutralised by 11...h6 12.b3

The latest game went 12.g4 O-O-O 13.♙g2 ♙b8 14.b3 d5! 15.♘d4 ♘xd4 16.♙xd4 ♙xd4 17.♙xd4 f5 18.gxf5 ♙xf5 19.♙xd5 and in ½-½ (58) Antal,G (2546) - Nabaty,T (2597) Porto Rio 2015, Black could have kept the position as is with 19...♙hf8 when White's pawn structure is much too weak for the extra material to count.

12...a6 13.g4 O-O-O 14.♙g2 and now Black only needs to know the correspondence game Konstantinou-Koch to equalise: 14...♙b8 15.♙de1 ♙de8 16.♙e2 ♙d8 17.♘d4 ♘xd4 18.♙xd4 h5 19.♙xf6 gxf6! = with equality (as already noted by Vuckovic).

It's important to remember this gxf6 recapture which gives Black dynamic options down the half-open g-file and with ...f5.

**11...h6** This is the thematic response, but it's also feasible to play Erenburg's favourite 11...O-O-O allowing White's



12.♘d4 ( 12.♙g5 ♙e7 13.Qf4 h6!?) 14.♙xf6 ♙xf6 15.♙xf6 gxf6 = is very safe for Black as we know from analogous positions.

12...♘xd4 13.♙xd4 ♙e5 14.♙e3!? This has been tried in some engine games, although I don't think Black should be worried after 14.f4 c5~ 15.♙xe5 dxe5 16.♙xd7+ ♙xd7 17.♙xd7 ♙xd7 18.fxe5 Re8 19.Bc4 Rxe5 20.♙xf7 ♙c6 21.♙g1 ♙xg2 = was an entirely equal ending in ½-½ (40) Quesada Perez,Y (2639) - Erenburg,S (2615) Arlington 2013

14...♙a4 15.b3 ♙xd4 16.cxd4 ♙a5 17.♙g5 ♙xg5 18.hxg5 h5 19.gxh6 ♙xh6 20.♙xh6 gxh6 and White has a symbolic plus with one less pawn island, but Black can defend fairly comfortably.

**12.♘d4 ♘xd4 13.♙xd4 ♙xd4 14.♙xd4 O-O 15.♙g1**

## NEUTRALISING E4 WITH THE PETROFF - P2



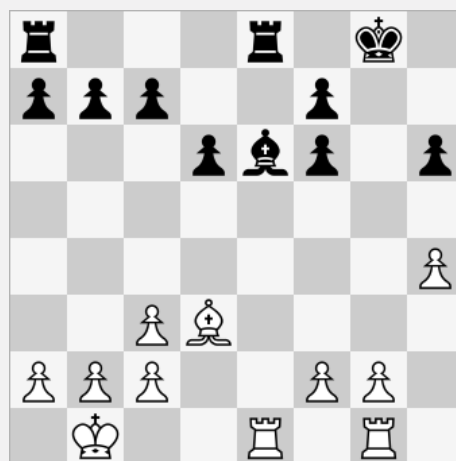
( 15.♙e2 ♖ae8 16.♙f3 b6 17.g4 ♗b5!  
( 17...f6 18.c4 += followed soon by g5  
gives White some pressure. )

18.g5 ( 18.♗d2 f6 19.♖he1 ♙f7  
20.♙e4 d5 21.♙d3 ♗a5 1/2-1/2 (44)  
Ni,H (2657) - Giri,A (2588) Wijk aan  
Zee 2010

22.b3 ♖xe1 23.♖xe1 d4 is also fine  
for Black, as noted by Vuckovic.  
18...♗c4 19.gxh6 ♗xd4 1/2-1/2 (47)  
Ponomariov,R (2751) - Wang,H (2733)  
Bucharest 2013 20.cxd4 gxh6 21.♙c6  
♖d8 22.♖de1 ♙d7 leaves White  
unable to make anything of his slight  
initiative.

**15...♗e7!** Without this prophylactic  
move White would achieve g4 and  
obtain some attacking chances.

**16.♙d3 ♖fe8 17.♖de1 ♗f6 18.♗xf6  
gxf6 =**



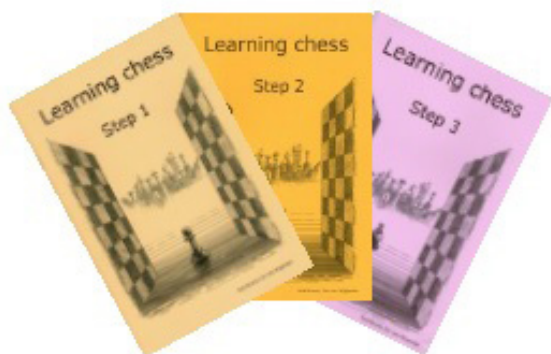
This endgame was very solid for Black  
despite the doubled pawns in 1/2-1/2 (30)  
Ding,L (2755) - Bu,X (2681) China 2015

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# ENDGAME LESSONS

*with FM Chris Wallis*

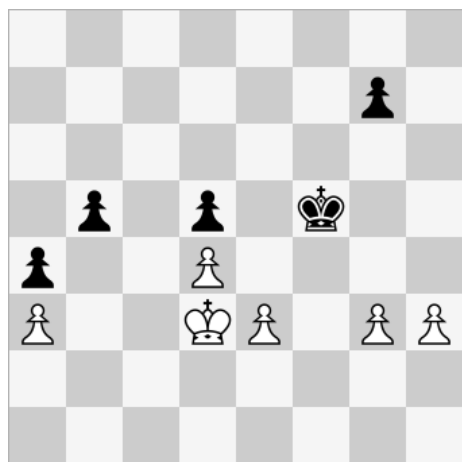
## Game 1

Chan, Louis

Nguyen, Leo

MCC Hjorth Open 2015

This week we present three examples of complicated endings with many pawns. Two are analysed in detail (though as a challenge, it is recommended to go to White's move 50 of this game - played in the recent Hjorth Open - , and Black's move 29 of Boleslavsky - Taimanov, and have a long think about what should happen...



This position was singled out by Vlad Smirnov on chesschat - he mentioned that Anton could not solve it! Of course, it tends to be particularly difficult to analyse such intricate positions when they are taken from another player's game. Still, the allure of solving such a difficult puzzle ('where others have failed') can be a powerful motivator, so I recommend having a go at finding White's winning line before continuing with the column!

**50.g4+** A necessary interlude - for now, a simple race develops between the kings. The subtlety comes later. An ingenious plan here would involve luring Black's king onto e4, hoping to drive it back to f5 and then take the opposition with  $\text{♔d3}$ . Useful because if Black's g-pawn is made to go to g5, then White blockades the kingside with g4+, and wins on the queenside.

Of course this doesn't work: 50. $\text{♔c3}$   $\text{♔e4}$  (forced) 51. $\text{♔d2}$

White is not in time after 51.Kb4 Kxe3 52. $\text{♔xb5}$  ( 52. $\text{♔c5}$  b4! )

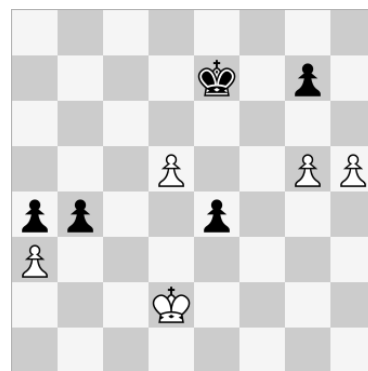
52... $\text{♔xd4}$  53. $\text{♔xa4}$   $\text{♔c4}$ .

51...g6! 52.h4  $\text{♔f3}$  is, if anything, winning for Black.

**50...♔g5 51.♔c3**

51.Kd2 is worth mentioning - White waits for the right moment to spring e3-e4 - hoping either that Black's king will be too far to stop the pawn, or that it will be decisively split between the d-pawn and the h- and g- majority.

This comes surprisingly close to working: 51... $\text{♔h4}$  52.e4 dxe4 53.d5  $\text{♔g5}$  54.h4+ looks promising, and yet after 54... $\text{♔f6}$  55.g5+  $\text{♔e7}$  56.h5, 56... b4! (Diagram) draws - the two kings are equally overwhelmed!



**51...♔h4 52.♔b4 ♔xh3**

52...g5 is more accurate; though it

# PAWN ENDINGS

should transpose to the game, where White missed 53 g5.

## 53. ♖xb5?!

53.g5! wins more easily: 53...♔g4 54.♖xb5 ♕xg5 55.♖c6 and Black's king cannot immediately reach the useful f3 square.

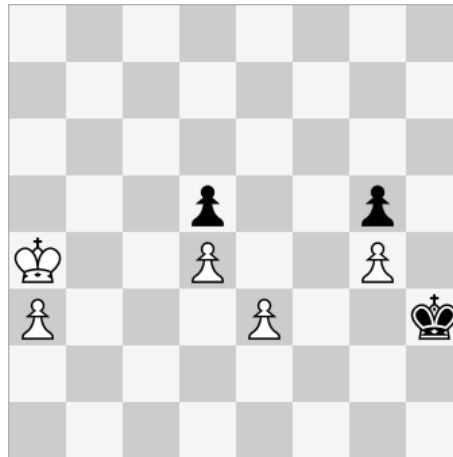
55...♔f5 56.♖xd5 g5 57.e4+ ♔f4 58.e5 g4 59.e6 g3 60.e7 g2 61.e8=♖ g1=♖ 62.♖e5+ ♔f3 63.♖e4+ ♔f2 64.♖c4

## 53...g5 Back on track...

53...♔xg4 54.♖c6 g5 would play out identically, in the strongest line (given below under 54. ♖c6).

But not the tempting 54...♔f3 55.♖xd5 ♕xe3?!, overlooking a skewer: 56.♖e5 g5 57.d5 g4 58.d6 g3 59.d7 g2 60.d8=♖ g1=♖ 61.♖d4+)

**54. ♖xa4?** (Diagram) Very natural - but here, the king's inertia had to be resisted! A change in direction would have led to victory.

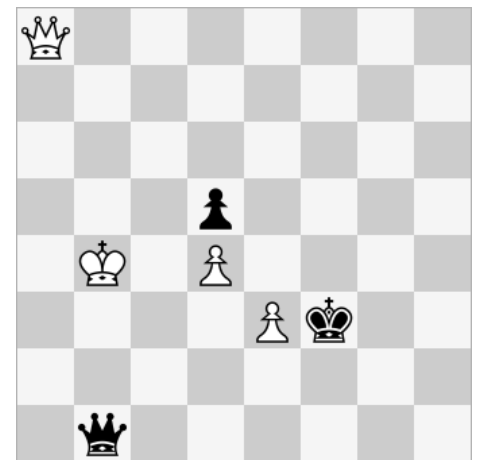


The point is 54.♖c6! - to promote the e-pawn! It takes the same amount of time to queen (although White's king was poised to capture at a4, it takes a move to free the pawn afterwards), but this choice of ♖+P ending leads to a win.

**54...♔xg4 55.♖xd5 Kf3 56.e4 g4 57.e5 g3 58.e6 g2 59.e7 g1=♖ 60.e8=♖ ♖g5+** the only check! It is fruitless to defend the a-pawn; 60... ♖d1 61.♖h5+ ♔e3 62.♖xd1.

61.♖e5 and gradually White can win. 61...♖g8+ 62.♖c6 ♖c4+ 63.♖c5 ♖e6+ 64.♖d6 ♖c4+ 65.♖b6 ♖b3+ 66.♖a5 ♔e4 67.♖e5+ ♔f3 68.d5 ♖xa3 69.d6 ♖d3 70.♖e6 ♖c3+ 71.♖xa4 is a sample of how this may go - the central d-pawn is winning as Black's king is not in front of it.

**54...♔xg4 55.♖b4 ♔f3 56.a4 g4 57.a5 g3 58.a6 g2 59.a7 g1=♖ 60.a8=♖ ♖b1+** (Diagram) Also possible was 60...Kxe3 61.♖xd5, though centre pawns are usually dire for the defender, as he has perpetual due to the vulnerability of the pawn: 61... ♖e1+ 62.♖b5 62.♖c5 ♖a5+ 63.♖d6 ♖d8+ is the famous queen windmill.



62...♖c3 and this attack on the d-pawn forces the draw: 63.♖e5+ ♔d3 and the game is drawn.

**61.♖c5 ♖c2+** Since the d-pawn turns out to be mined, White cannot win this position. **62.♖b6** Not 62.♖xd5 ♖e4+

**62...♖b3+ 63.♖c5 ♖c2+ 64.♖d6 ♖g6+ 65.♖c7 ♖f7+ 66.♖d6 ♖g6+**

1/2 - 1/2

## ENDGAME LESSON

### Game 2

Boleslavsky, isaak

Taimanov, Mark E

Candidates 1953

This game is annotated by Bronstein in his book on the 1953 Candidates tournament - in general, that book is such a treasure trove that, unless you've read it thoroughly cover to cover (an advantage of the book's format is that this is quite unnecessary...), you can always find something new!

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 ♘b7 5.Bg2 Be7 6.O-O O-O 7.♘c3 ♘e4 8.♚c2 ♘xc3 9.♚xc3 f5 10.b3 ♘f6 11.♘b2**



Quite a common variation in the 50s and 60s - for example, it was seen in the final match game of Tal - Botvinnik, Moscow 1960, where Tal secured a quick draw as White to win the title.

**11...♘c6 12.♚ad1 ♚e8 13.♚c2 ♘d8 14.d5 ♘xb2 15.♚xb2 exd5 16.cxd5 c5 17.dxc6 dxc6 18.♘e5 ♚f6 19.f4 ♘f7 20.♚d7 ♘xe5 21.fxe5 ♚xd7 22.exf6 ♚f8 23.fxg7 ♚xg7 24.♚xg7+ ♘xg7 25.e4 fxe4 26.♚xf8 ♘xf8 27.♘xe4 h6**



Black has got himself into difficulties - with dubious play in the opening (11... d6 was more solid), and Bronstein implies that White's advantage based on the relative activity of his king and bishop, and the ease of creating a passed pawn with the kingside majority is sufficient to win. This evaluation does appear to be correct.

**28.♘f2 ♘e7 29.♘f3** (Diagram)

Taimanov has to decide where to place his bishop and king. The bishop has a choice of two squares - c8 and a6. Meanwhile, the king can go to d6, or perhaps wait. It appears logical first to defend the pawn with ...♘d6 and then to move the bishop, but there is a strong counterargument - since White is interested in playing

♘g4, Black could perhaps wait for this move and then play ...♘c8+, retaining the c-pawn whilst activating his bishop. The drawback, of course, is that he will have to play with a single passed pawn against White's connected passers on the kingside - but the situation becomes double-edged, and it will certainly be challenging for White to realise his advantage. This explains the course of the game. Objectively, it may be better to play ...♘d6, as analysed below.



**29...a5** This is connected with the idea of luring White's king deep into the kingside, and then counterattacking on the queenside.





## ENDGAME LESSON

At first, 29...♙c8 30.♙xc6 ♔d6, returning the pawn for activity, looks good, but the usefulness of the king at e5 is questionable: 31.♙e8 ♔e5 32.g4, and White's plan of creating a passed pawn and then winning on the queenside seems unstoppable.

29...♔d6 30.♔g4 ♔e5

30...♙a6 31.♔h5 c5 32.♔xh6 c4 33.bxc4 ♙xc4 34.♙b1 should certainly win for White.

31.♙f3 ♙a6 32.♔h5

The tactical point is that 32.♙xc6 ♙e2+ 33.♔h4 b5! - it is important to fix a favourable queenside - 34.g4

34.b4 ♔d4! with equal chances

34...b4 35.♔h5 ♔f6 36.Be4

36.♔xh6 Bxg4 is certainly impossible.

36...♙d1 is drawn.

32...c5 33.♔xh6 c4 34.bxc4 ♙xc4. The assessment of the entire ending does seem to hinge on whether White can win here.

35.h4 ♙xa2 36.h5 b5

( 36...♔f5 37.♙c6 )

37.♔g7 b4 38.h6 b3 39.h7 b2 40.h8=♚ b1=♚ is then critical; to sum up, White can win the a7 pawn and then has excellent chances to shepherd the

g-pawn through, so it does appear possible to win.

41.♔h6+ ♔d6 42.♚d4+ ♔e6 43.♙g4+ ♔e7 44.♚c5+ ♔e8 45.♙h5+ ♔d7 46.♚xa7+ is then critical - according to the 7-man Lomonosov tablebases, White is able to win (#48!). So certainly we have found nothing to contradict Bronstein's assessment.

**30.♔g4 ♙c8+** As pointed out by Bronstein, Black is correct in surrendering the h-pawn to activate the bishop (in fact, part of the plan is that White's king is supposed to plug the h-file!).

30...♔f6 is too passive; but White must be careful and play 31.♔f4 ( 31.♔h5 ♔g7 32.g4 ♙a6 33.♙xc6 ♙e2 is more complicated.)

**31.♔h5 c5 32.♔xh6 ♔f6 33.♙f3** (Diagram) Now we have come to another critical moment.



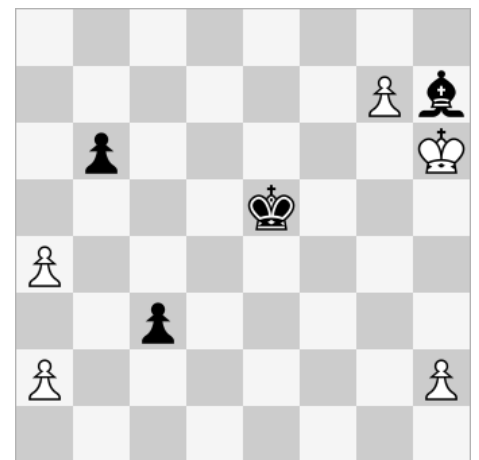
**33...a4!?** 33...b5 is insufficient: 34.g4 c4 35.bxc4 bxc4 36.g5+ ♔e5 37.g6 c3

38.♙d1 ♔f6 39.g7 ♙e6 40.a3 and Black's defensive formation is susceptible to zugzwang - so White will be able to push the h-pawn through.

**34.bxa4** A miscalculation, and though ultimately no harm should be done, Black's practical chances improve - he gets to defend a ♚+Pawn ending.

34.g4, as observed by Bronstein, wins more simply; 34...axb3 35.axb3 ♙e6 36.♙d1 b5 37.h4 c4 38.bxc4 bxc4 39.g5+ ♔e5 40.g6 +-

**34...c4 35.g4 c3 36.g5+ ♔e5 37.Bd1 ♙g4 38.♙c2 ♙f5 39.g6 ♙xc2 40.g7 ♙h7!** (Diagram) An excellent choice - now, in spite of himself, White must play a queen ending.



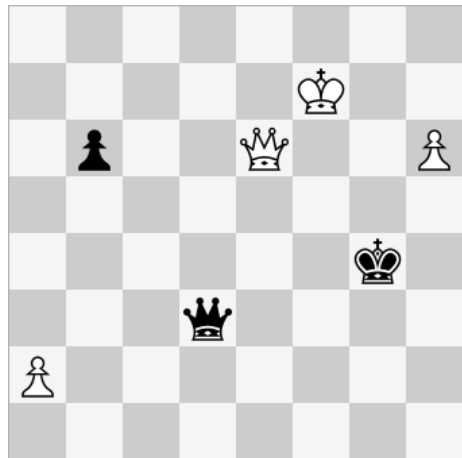
It seems that Boleslavsky expected 40...♙b3 41.axb3 c2 42.g8=♚ c1=♚+ 43.♚g5+ with a simple win.

**41.♔xh7 c2 42.g8=♚ c1=♚ 43.♚b8+ ♔d5 44.♚b7+ ♔e5 45.♚g7+ ♔d5 46.♚f7+ ♔e5 47.h4 ♚c2+ 48.♔g7 ♚xa4 49.♚f6+**

## ENDGAME LESSON

49.h5 wins; although the position with the queenside pawns absent would be drawn, their presence makes matters more difficult for Black as queen exchanges are not possible; eg 49...♖g4+ 50.♗g6 ♕f3 would be necessary to defend the position with only the h-pawn, but here loses to 51.h6 ♖b7+ 52.♗f7 ♖g2+ 53.♔f8 ♗a8+ 54.♗e8+ ♖xe8+ 55.Kxe8 Kf6 56.a4 ♔g6 57.♔d7 ♔xh6 58.♔c6 ♔g6 59.♔xb6 ♔f7 60.♔c6 etc.

49...♔e4 50.♗e6+ ♔f4 51.h5 ♔g5 52.♗e5+ ♔g4 53.h6 ♖d7+ 54.♔f6 ♖d8+ 55.♔f7 ♖d7+ 56.♗e7 ♖d3 57.♗e6+ The proximity of Black's king now becomes problematic, though the position remains a win.



57.♔f8! was simplest - Black cannot then avoid the advance of the pawn, since Black's checks run dry very quickly.

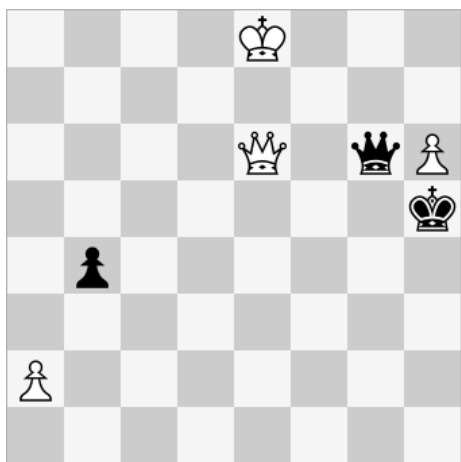
57...♔h5 58.♔e8?? The real mistake - now, Black has the possibility of exchanging queens.

58.a4! keeps the advantage associated with the queenside pawns.

58...b5! 59.♔e7

59.a3 ♔g5 doesn't help - ...♗xa3+ is restricting the movements of White's king.

59...b4 60.♔e8 ♖g6+ (Diagram)



It seems that Boleslavsky became fatigued towards the finish of this game - understandable, given the immense complexity of the endgame, which was on the board well before anytime scramble. This game is a good example of Taimanov's resourcefulness as a defender. (Elsewhere in his book, Bronstein called him 'the optimist of the chessboard'.)

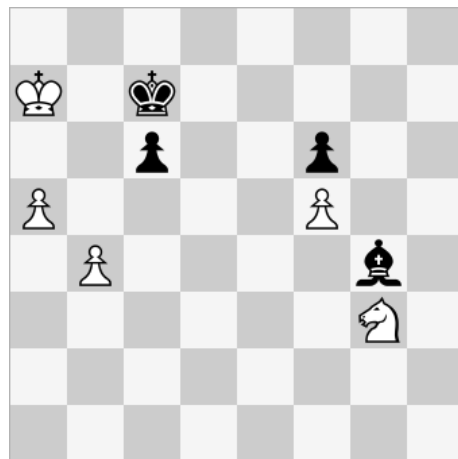
1/2 - 1/2

### Game 3

Pecori, Ascaro

Wallis, Christopher

Box Hill Open 2004

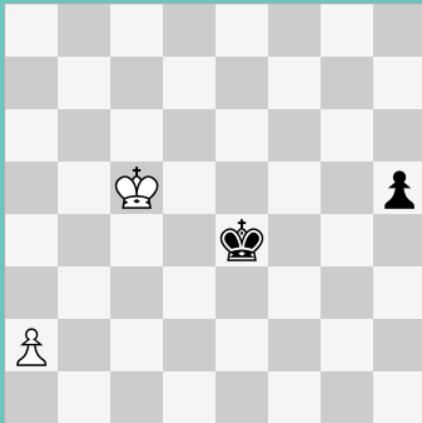


This position occurred in an old game of mine - Ascaro Pecori - Chris Wallis, Box Hill Open 2004! It's a shame that this happened in time trouble; there is a spectacularly deep and subtle variation here, and no time for Ascaro to find it!

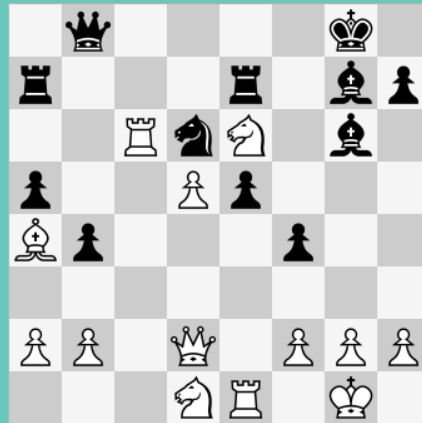
Solution will be released in the next issue.

1/2 - 1/2

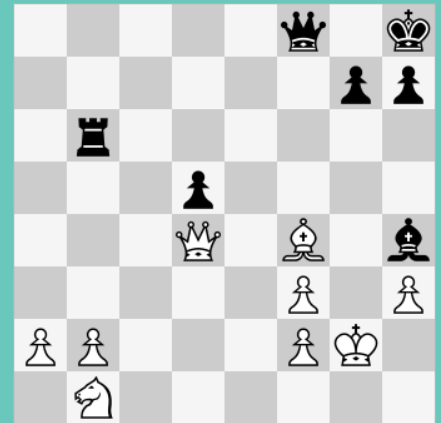
# SOLUTIONS



1. a4 and white queens with check



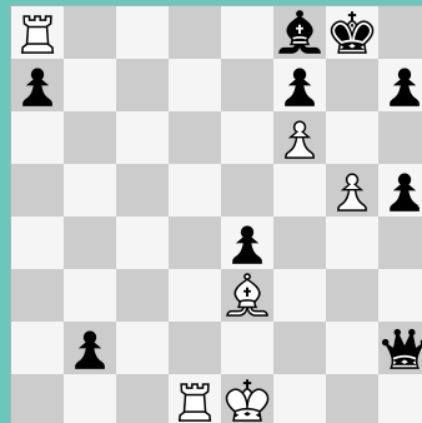
1... ♖e8!



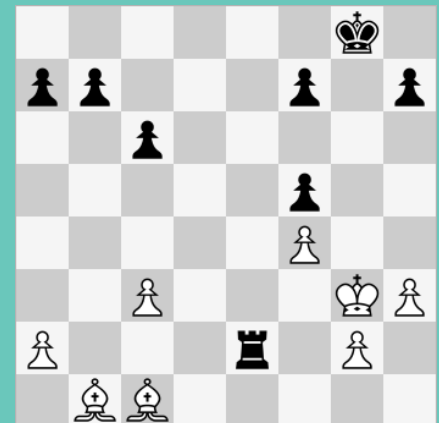
1... ♜b4!



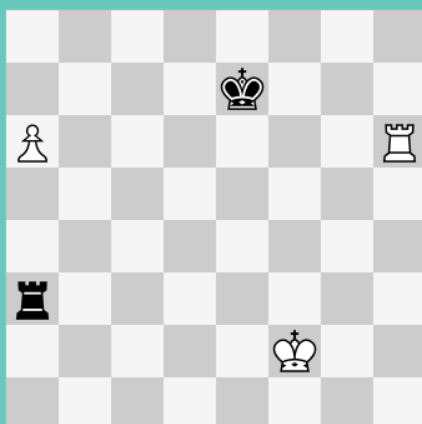
1... ♜b1+! 2. ♔xe2 ♜xh1



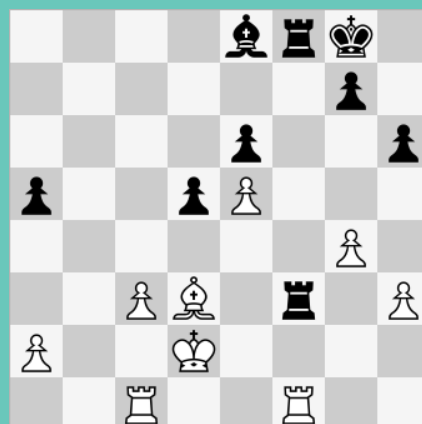
1... ♜h1+ 2. ♔e2 ♜xd1+ followed by b1=♜+



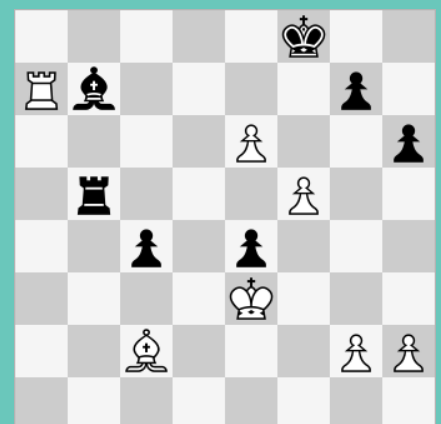
1... ♜e1



1. a7 ♔d7 2. ♜h8! ♜xa7 3. ♜h7+

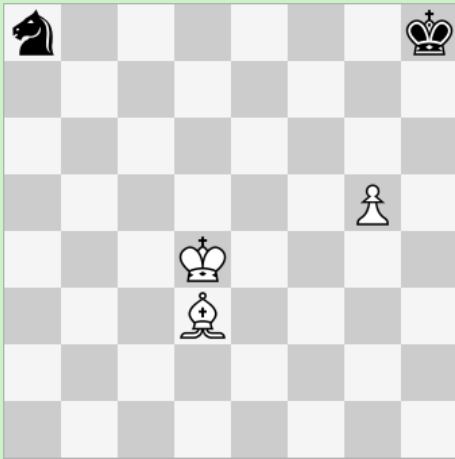


1. ♜xd3+ ♔xd3 2. ♜xf1 ♜xf1 3. ♔b5+



1. e2+ ♔xe2 2. ♔xe4 or 1... ♔e8 ♔a4

## SOLUTIONS



### Solution 1

With only one pawn up in the minor piece endgame, one can usually only hope for a draw - but here, White can exploit the bad positioning of Black's knight which is dominated throughout.

**1. ♖c5! ♜c7 2. ♖d6 ♜e8+**

2... ♜a8 3. ♖c6 ♖g7 4. ♖b7

**3. ♖e7**

3. ♖d7? lets the win slip after 3... ♜g7 4. ♖g6 ♖g8 5. ♖e7 ♖h8 6. ♖f7 ♜f5 and the knight escapes.

**3... ♜g7**

3... ♜c7 4. ♖f7 ♜d5 5. g6

**4. ♖g6! ♖g8 5. ♖f7+ ♖h7**

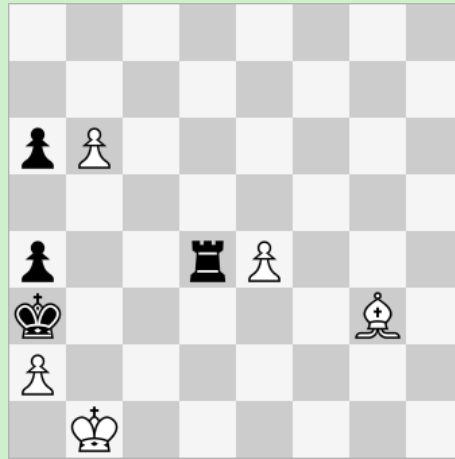
5... ♖h8 leads to the same, where White does not have to lose a tempo.

**6. ♖f6 ♖h8 7. ♖e5!**

7. ♖g6? ♜e6! **7... ♖h7 8. ♖e4! ♖h8**

**9. ♖f4 ♖h7 10. ♖g4 ♖h8 11. g6**

Zugzwang.



### Solution 2

**1.b7** At first sight, the b-pawn looks to be the decider, but... 1... ♜b4+

2. ♖a1 a5! 3. b8=♙! with 2B vs. R.

3. b8=♖? ♜b1+

3. b8=♜? ♜xe4 ( 3... ♜d4 is another

move that draws.) 4. ♖d6+ ♜b4

5. ♖xb4+ axb4

**3... ♜xe4 4. ♖bd6+! ♜b4 5. ♖c7!**

**♜e4**

5... ♜b1+ slowly loses: 6. ♖xb1 ♖b4

7. ♖gd6+ ♖b5 8. a3! ♖c6 9. ♖c2 ♖b5

10. ♖c3 ♖c6 11. ♖c4 ♖b7 12. ♖b5

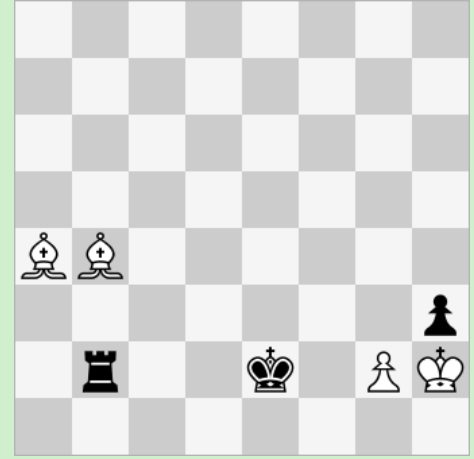
♖a8 13. ♖b4 ♖b7 14. ♖cd6 ♖a8

15. ♖a6 axb4 16. axb4 a3 17. ♖e5 a2

18. Kb6

**6. ♖gd6+ ♜b4 7. ♖e5! ♜e4 8. ♖cd6+**

**♜b4 9. ♖b2#**



### Solution 3

White would like to enter a winning endgame by capturing the pawn on h3, but he cannot do so while a bishop is attacked - he must find a free tempo somehow.

**1. ♖c3 ♜a2 2. ♖b3**

2. ♖b5+? ♖d1 3. ♖xh3 ♜a3

**2... ♜a3 3. ♖c4+ ♖e3**

3... ♖d1 4. ♖b4

**4. ♖b4**

4. ♖b2? ♜a4

**4... ♜a4 5. ♖c5+ ♖e4**

5... ♖d2 6. ♖b3

**6. ♖b5**

6. ♖b3? ♜a5

**6... ♜a5 7. ♖c6+ ♖e5**

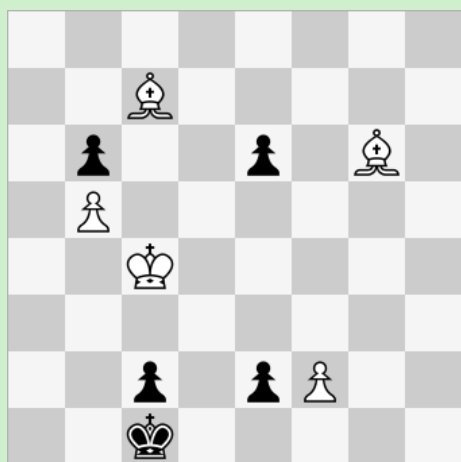
7... ♖d3 8. ♖b4

**8. ♖b6 ♜a6 9. ♖c7+ ♖e6 10. ♖b7**

10. ♖b5? ♜a7

**10... ♜a7 11. ♖c8+ ♖e7 12. ♖b6** At last. 12... ♜a8 13. ♖xh3 The finale of a lovely dance up the board.





## Solution 4

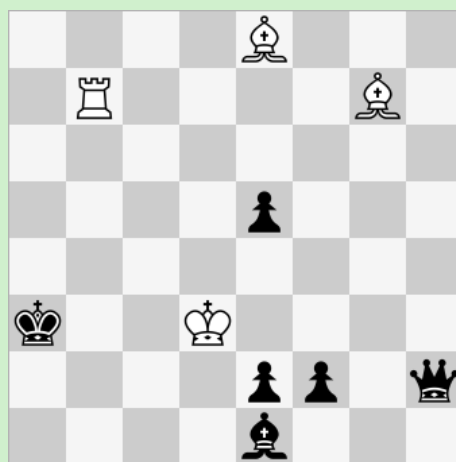
Queening cannot be prevented, so it is up to the power of the two bishops to win against Her Majesty.

**1. ♖b3 e1=♚**

1...e5 2. ♗xc2! e1=♚ 3. ♗xb6 ♖d2  
4. ♗a5+

**2. ♗f4+ ♖b1 3. ♗xc2+ ♖a1 4. ♗d6 ♚e2 5. ♗b4 ♚xb5 6. ♗e4! e5 7. f3**

Zugzwang.



## Solution 5

A tense battle. White, of course, must go on the offense.

**1. ♗f8+ ♖a2 2. ♖c2 ♚h7+**

2. ♗f7+? ♖a1 3. ♖c2? ♚h7+

**2... ♚h7+**

2... ♗a5 3. ♗f7+

**3. ♚xh7 ♗a5 4. ♗f7+**

4. ♚h3? e1=♗+

**4... ♖a1 5. ♗a3**

5. ♚h4? e1=♗+

**5... e1=♗+**

5... ♗c3 6. ♗c4

**6. ♖b3 f1=♚ 7. ♗b2+ ♖b1 8. ♗g6+ e4**

8... ♚d3+ 9. ♗xd3+ ♗xd3 10. ♚h1+ ♗e1 11. ♗c3 ♗c1+ 12. ♖c4 ♗f2 13. ♗d2

8... ♗d3 9. ♚h1

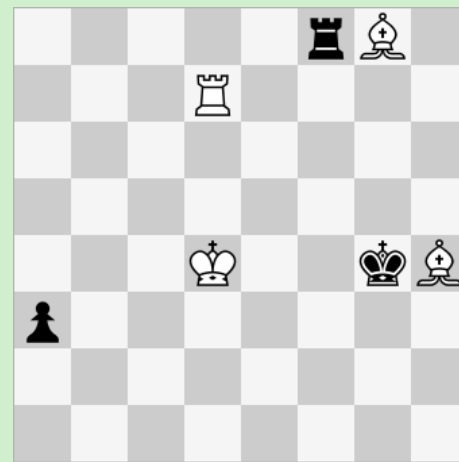
**9. ♗xe4+ ♗d3 10. ♚h1 ♗e1**

**11. ♗g6!**

11. ♖a3? ♚f8+

**11... ♚e2 12. ♚xe1+ ♚xe1**

**13. ♗xd3#**



## Solution 6

White must save both bishops, while also keeping an eye out on Black's passer.

**1. ♚d8! a2!**

1... ♚f4+ 2. ♖e3 ♚a4 3. ♗f6

**2. ♗xa2 ♚f4+ 3. ♖e3 ♚a4 4. ♗b3 ♚b4**

4... ♚a3 5. ♚d4+ ♖h5 6. ♚b4

**5. ♚d4+! ♚xd4 6. ♗e7!** a common motif in studies where the rook is dominated on an open board by the two bishops.

**6... ♚f4 7. ♗e6+ ♖g3**

7... ♚f5 8. ♗f6

**8. ♗d6**

# EXPLORATION IN EVALUATION

BY IM ANDREW BROWN

## Part 1 - The Relative Value of Pieces

One of the most important qualities a chess player must have is the ability to accurately evaluate positions. With every actual position that occurs in a game there are almost always a multitude of others that have been conceived of and appraised in the process of determining the best course of action. In this series we will explore some of the complexities involved with evaluating positions and consider some of the factors that make one chess player's evaluating ability better than another's.

What you will see in these articles is merely my present conception, the result of my own studious reasoning processes on these topics. I do not wish to suggest that all these ideas are set in stone or cannot be refined or improved on – in fact I welcome close scrutiny and any (constructive) feedback readers may have. This, I expect, will only help me develop as a writer, thinker and player, and will contribute to our overall understanding of these aspects of chess.

With that out of the way, let us begin. (Readers who are uninterested in philosophy and/or psychology may prefer to skip this first section in favour of the more chess-filled second half.)

## OBJECTIVITY AND SUBJECTIVITY

The first place to start, in my opinion, for any conversation concerning the fundamentals of evaluating a position, is at the end result: checkmate. (This is provided we know the rules and functions of each piece.) When checkmate is on the board, or is obviously unstoppable, there is no need for further discussion. Given checkmate is the ultimate goal, this is what all our efforts should ultimately be directed at, barring, of course, cases where the best result one can achieve (in all likelihood) is a draw. For this reason we can call any sequence of moves that leads to unstoppable checkmate – or draw – and that does not violate any rules – such as the 50-move rule – our first objective reference point for evaluating a position.

If we progress logically from this first point, we can say that, strictly speaking, any assessment of a position that does not provide absolute win, loss, or draw certainty cannot for the purpose of true evaluation in chess be called objective.

We may be objective about whether this tactic wins an exchange or whether or not this sequence will give us a passed a-pawn but it is only truly objective for chess evaluation purposes insofar as we can know with absolute certainty what the result will be in relation to the outcome of the game. So that would not mean '-0.42 to 0.63' or '=+ to +=' or 'I was worse but my opponent slipped up and handed me the advantage' but rather whether this factor (say, giving up the e-file) logically-verifiably altered the outcome of the game (e.g., the game went from an unstoppable win to an unstoppable loss).

This is what makes mastering chess such a frightfully complex undertaking. Our mere human minds are not (to the best of my knowledge) capable of absolute objectivity in chess evaluation beyond being able to identify, unequivocally, a sequence of moves (e.g., forced mate) or the conditions (e.g., two queens versus lone king) that render checkmate (or a draw) unstoppable. Rather we require the aid of patterns, guide posts and general principles to help us establish understanding. For this reason, perhaps what a lot of players call objectivity is oftentimes actually a sort of objective subjectivity. We shall explore this phenomenon via an endgame study further into the article.

Does this mean we should abandon all attempts at objectivity? Absolutely not. It is vitally important that we have what I think we have (or seek to have) most of the time in chess, a sort of contextual objectivity – e.g., this is the only way to get my king safe and stay in the game. However, what we need to do is understand that all the principles we learn (castle early, avoid doubled-pawns) that cannot be logically verified to alter the outcome of the game should be regarded as theoretical; respected, certainly, but not treated as the ultimate truth. We have to know that it is okay at times to discard general principles and refrain from “standard procedure,” and that it is necessary and desirable for us as chess players (and as human beings) to exercise the freedom to develop our own independent understanding. Such factors are what distinguish players’ creative capacities.

Nevertheless, we do need subjective reference points and intuitive guides if we are not computers or super-humans. We need to be able to pick up and remember patterns, and we need to test our theories and assumptions while always maintaining both the desire to expand our understanding and an unbridled concern for objectivity. And of course we all have our own personal preferences that may shape our judgement and what we look for with or without our knowledge – this is okay too, and is largely what constitutes our unique style.

## REFERENCE POINTS

Over the years chess players and theoreticians have developed seven reference points to aid us in evaluating positions. They are generally accepted as follows:\*

1. Material balance
2. Presence of direct threats
3. Position of kings/king safety
4. Possession of open lines
5. Pawn structure, weak and strong squares
6. Centre and space
7. Development and piece position

When we start playing chess we learn relatively quickly how to checkmate, how to get pieces out fast, and that more pieces is better. But of course the stronger our opposition, the greater the importance of our choices and the need to make moves that are going to result in positive outcomes. We no longer pay so much attention to four-move-checkmates and royal forks and we start having to learn how to calculate trade-offs, keep the structural integrity of our pawn structure, and how to make a passed pawn and gain important tempi in an endgame.

Still, as quality of play rises, assessment necessarily becomes increasingly abstract, with more and more minute details coming into play – many of which are understood by strong players subconsciously or unconsciously but can be very difficult to articulate. Here is an example of some of the heights of these levels of abstraction, illuminated in a beautiful study composed by Gurgenidze.\*\* Not for the faint hearted! (D)



1.hxg7 ♖g2+! 2.♔f1!!

2.♔xg2? ♖xh2+! 3.♔xh2 ♕xf7 4.gxf7 ♔xf7 5.♘xd7 b3  
6.♘e5+! ♔xg7 7.♘c4 bxa2

2... ♖f2+ 3.♔e1 ♖e2+ 4.♔d1 ♖d2+ 5.♔c1 ♖c2+  
6.♔b1 ♖b2+ 7.♔a1! ♖xa2+ 8.♔b1 ♖b2+ 9.♔c1  
♖c2+ 10.♔d1 ♖d2+ 11.♔e1 ♖e2+ 12.♔f1 ♖f2+  
13.♔g1 ♖g2+ 14.♔xg2! ♖xh2+ 15.♔xh2 ♕xf7  
16.gxf7 ♔xf7 17.♘xd7 b3

( 17...a3 18.♘c5 )

18.♘e5+ ♔xg7 19.♘c4 b2 20.♘a3! ♔f6

eg. 21.♔g3 ♔e6 22.♔f3 ♔d5 23.f5 ♔c5 24.♘b1 ♔b4  
25.f6 a3 26.f7

1-0

Bearing in mind the inherent difficulty in solving such a deep study, here is a situation where I would imagine most players would not so much think as “know” that it could not objectively be good to allow this perpetual-like sequence or to “needlessly” give up their a-pawn, and so an important possibility does not occur to them. I think this sort of thing actually happens all the time in chess without us realising it, and that there are a lot of things that we do not see simply because we do not give ourselves the opportunity to look for them. \*\*\*

Of course, because there is so much we can look for and so much we have to be able to assess and keep in our heads as we develop as players, it is somewhat of a paradox that sometimes we can spend all our time and energy focussing on certain nuances and intricacies (e.g., a long sequence to gain a tempo) whilst overlooking what would ordinarily be simple, such as a way to win material – or even to checkmate! Note that, perhaps due in part to the presence or knowledge of such intricacies, these sorts of mistakes do not just happen to beginners or intermediates but in fact have occurred quite frequently (more than one might expect) in top level chess and world championship matches. Here is an entertaining video of this phenomenon in action.

<https://youtu.be/RtSPhginkNQ?t=7m22s>

On account of all of these endless complexities, rather than look at each of the aforementioned reference points in detail I would now like to explore what is a relatively overarching theme in evaluating positions and something that I find is very much a central part of chess.

**\*From Find the Right Plan (Karpov and Matsukevich, 2008)**

**\*\*Thanks to Junta Ikeda for introducing me to the work of this marvellous composer.**

**\*\*\*You may be interested in taking part in a [little chess experiment](#) I have devised to test out some of these ideas.**

Anatoly Karpov (yes, the Karpov) and Anatoly Matsukevich in their book Find the Right Plan present their conception of the most important law in chess, which I find very hard to disagree with: “Restricting the mobility of your opponent’s pieces (and in association with this: domination by your own) – is the most important law of chess.”

Basically, a piece is only so good as it can be used, and how well a piece can be used is determined by (1) its innate qualities (e.g., bishops can move diagonally, long-range) and (2) its position and freedom of movement. The following game is a good example of how, even when material and other factors are level, it is piece mobility that gives one side an overwhelming advantage over the other.

## Game 1

**Bruce Harper**

**Robert D Zuk**

Halloween Open 1971

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♕g7 4.e4 d6 5.♘f3 O-O 6.♕e2  
e5 7.O-O ♘c6 8.d5 ♘e7 9.♕d2 ♘h5 10.♖c1 c5 11.g3  
♘f6 12.a3 ♘e8 13.♘e1 f5 14.exf5 ♘xf5 15.♕f3 b6  
16.♕g2 ♘d4 17.f4 ♕f5 18.fxe5 ♕xe5 19.♕h6 ♕g7  
20.♕xg7 ♘xg7 21.♘d3 ♖g5 22.♘f4 ♖ae8 23.♖a4  
♖e7 24.♘b5 ♘xb5 25.♖xb5 With Black to move, it  
does not look like there should be too much going on  
here; perhaps Black is slightly more active, but surely it  
cannot be anything serious..





25... ♖e3+ 26. ♔h1 g5 27. ♘h3 ♙d3 Now White's position is getting a little uncomfortable. His knight is out of play and he has a troublesome task of deciding what to do with his rook.



28. ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 29. ♖g1 ♙e4 30. ♖d7



White is still hanging on, though his pieces are running out of squares rather quickly now... 30... ♙xg2+ 31. ♖xg2 ♖e4 32. ♘g1 h6 33. h4 ♖f2 Black and White have both created space for themselves on the kingside. Black for his king, and White... Well, the next move is forced.



34. ♖h3 g4 35. ♖h2 h5 36. b4 ♖f1 It seems White's worst nightmare has become a reality. Now he only has a handful of pawn moves left before he will be forced to play Qh3. It is interesting to note that the material balance stayed the same from move 25 onwards - what changed was all to do with piece mobility, and that alone was decisive.



37. b5 ♙h8 38. a4 ♙h7 39. a5 ♙g8

0-1

When I think of relative piece values, and specifically how one piece can be substantially more powerful than it usually is, the game that comes to mind is the following.

## Game 2

Boris Gelfand

Viswanathan Anand

Linares 1993

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 c5 4.d5 ♘f6 5.♘c3 b5!?



6.♙f4 ♖a5 7.e5 ♘e4 8.♘e2 ♘a6! Allowing 9.f3, Anand has a remarkable idea in mind.



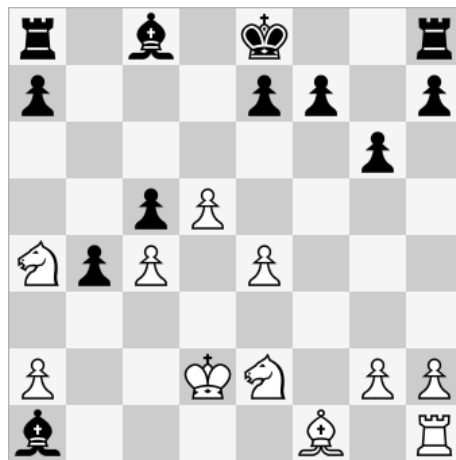
9.f3 ♘b4!! 10.fxe4 ♘d3+ 11.♔d2 ♙g6! Black has given up a piece in order to promote his knight to the rank of octopus, but instead of trying to win back material - say via ...♘f2 - Anand calmly begins to develop; his point being that White's development is hopelessly stifled so long as his monstrosity on d3 can hold its outpost.



12.b3 ♙g7 13.bxc4 ♘xf4 Now Black can comfortably afford to give up his knight as he will now win back more than enough material.



14.♘xf4 ♙xe5 15.♘e2 b4 16.♖a4+ ♖xa4 17.♘xa4 ♙xa1 And Black went on to win.



18.♘xc5 O-O 19.♘d3 a5 20.g3 ♙g7 21.♙g2 ♙a6

22.c5 ♖ac8 23.c6 ♜fd8 24.♜c1  
 ♙h6+ 25.♞ef4 ♙xd3 26.♞xd3  
 e5 27.♞c4 exf4 28.♜e1 fxg3  
 29.e5 ♙f4 30.hxg3 ♙xg3 31.♜e3  
 ♙f4 32.♜e4 ♙h2 33.♙h3 ♜c7  
 34.♜e2 ♙g3 35.♜e3 ♙f4 36.♜e4  
 g5 37.♞c5 ♜e7 38.♞d4 f6 39.d6  
 ♙xe5+ 40.♜xe5 ♜xd6+

0-1

It is interesting how one piece that would ordinarily be much more powerful than another may occasionally not be – or indeed be greatly inferior – given the right circumstances. Composers have a long history of exploring this theme. Here are some chess compositions based on this theme to finish with. I hope the reader will be interested in reading Part 2 of my discussion on evaluation, expected to be in the February 2016 issue of 50 Moves.

Enjoy!

Position 14 (Moderate)



1.♞f4+ ♞c5 2.♞e6+ ♞d5 3.♞xc7+  
 ♞c5 4.♞xa6+ ♞d5 5.♞c7+ ♞c5  
 6.♞e6+ ♞d5 7.♞f4+ ♞c5 8.♞e4  
 d5+ 9.♞e5 ♙f6+ 10.♞e6 ♞d8+  
 11.♞d7

1-0

Position 15 (Moderately Hard)



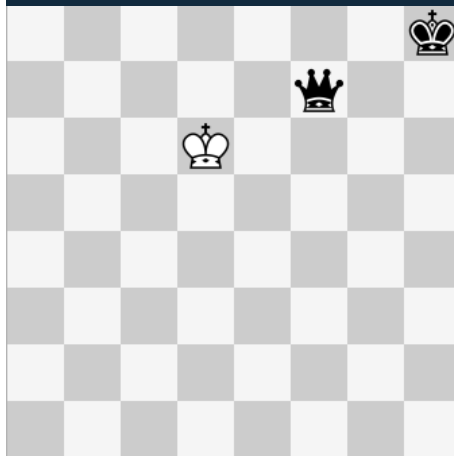
1.♞c7! ( 1.♞a8 ♙e4 )

1...c2 2.♞b8!! ♜c3 3.♞a8 ♜b3  
 ( 3... ♜c8+ 4.bxc8=♜# )

4.b8=♞#

1-0

Position 16 (Easy)



You're White. Choose which piece of yours you would like to put on e6.

Your move first.

1-0

Position 17 (Moderate)



1.♙g6+ ♞h6 2.b5 a4 3.a3 ♜d8  
 4.♞xa7 ♜c8 5.♙f2 ♜d8 6.♞b7  
 ♜e7 7.♞c8 ♜f8 8.♞d7 ♜h8

8...♜g8 9.♞e7 ♜h8 10.♞f7

9.♞e7 ♜g8 10.♙g1 ♜h8 11.♞f7

1-0

A conceptual image featuring three chess pieces—a king, a pawn, and a rook—positioned on a financial document. The document includes a line graph with an orange line showing fluctuations, and various text elements such as 'Aktiemarked', 'Copenhagen 20', and 'OMX Copenhagen 20'. The scene is lit with a warm, golden light, creating a sophisticated and strategic atmosphere.

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